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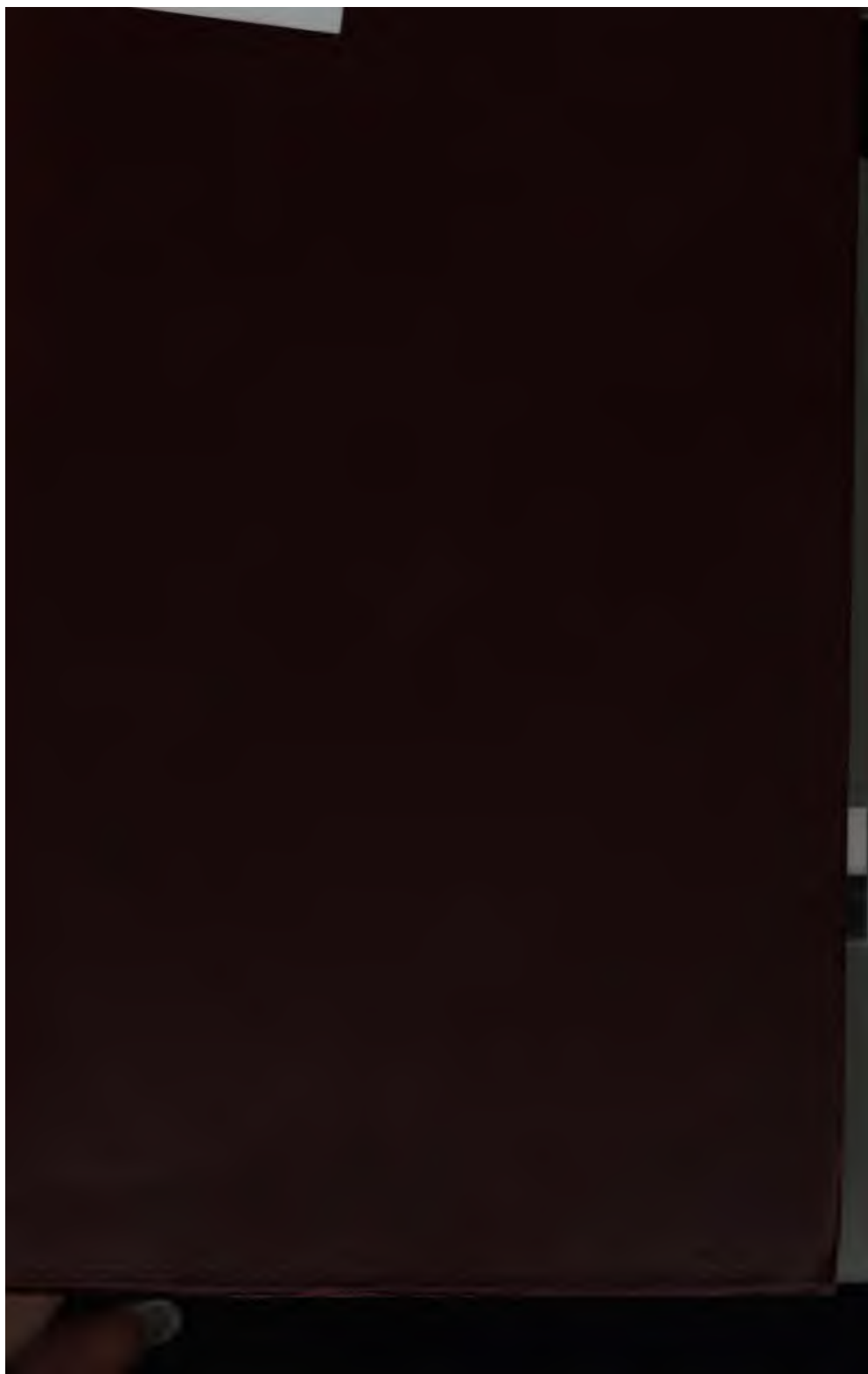
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W.H. 104



SARDOU
AND THE SARDOU PLAYS



SARDOU AT HIS DESK

SARDOU

AND THE SARDOU PLAYS

BY
of the
JEROME A. HART

AUTHOR OF "A LEVANTINE LOG-BOOK," "TWO ARGONAUTS IN SPAIN,"
"A VIGILANTE GIRL," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON
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PREFATORY NOTE

THE term "the Sardou plays" is used in these pages for various reasons. Many of these plays were written in collaboration with other dramatists less well known. In this book the names of Sardou's collaborators are given in each case in the text. In the chronological table of plays and elsewhere, to save repetition, only Sardou's name is appended. Still, a play written in collaboration is not "a play by Sardou," but it may be called "a Sardou play." Such plays are usually so termed by those who have had to do with them, and so they are called in these pages.

Then again, most of the versions made in English from Sardou's plays have been so freely "adapted" as to depart widely from the original. "Dora," for example, was turned into "Diplomacy"; the scene was transferred from France to England; the diplomatic intrigues of the German foreign office were replaced by Anglo-Russian plots concerning the Russo-Turkish war; two strangers in the French play were made blood-brothers in the English version; many other changes were made. So with "Divorçons," and with other of Sardou's plays: the alterations in unauthorised versions were so numerous that he complained bitterly. Therefore it is perhaps fair to call such plays "Sardou plays" rather than "plays by Sardou." All the plays, therefore, are thus denominated, including those where authorised versions were made by Sardou's consent, such as "Robespierre."

The first part of the book is devoted to a biographical

sketch of the playwright Sardou; the second is made up of analyses of some two score of the Sardou plays—not critical but narrative analyses. In the biographical half, the plays are arranged chronologically; in the second half, they are arranged arbitrarily, in the order of their interest, their importance, or their success. Thus, “*La Haine*” is an important play, but was not specially successful on the stage; “*Madame Sans-Gêne*” was a great stage success, but not specially important from a literary point of view.

It is perhaps needless to say that these analyses were not made from the English versions: the original plots, names of characters, etc., have been followed here.

The part devoted to “the Sardou plays in the United States” is a record, but does not purport to be complete. Most of the first productions of the Sardou plays in the United States were made in New York; if successful, they were played in other cities. It would be useless repetition to print the details of reproductions all over the United States.

January, 1913.

J. A. H.

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF THE SARDOU PLAYS AND LIBRETTI

PIECE	THEATRE	DATE OF PRODUCTION
<i>Les Amis Imaginaires</i>	Never played.	
<i>La Reine Ulfra</i>	Never played.	
<i>La Taverne des Étudiants</i>	Odéon	Apr. 1, 1854
<i>Bernard Palissy</i>	Never played.	
<i>Fleur de Liane</i>	Never played.	
<i>Le Bossu</i>	Never played	
<i>Candide</i>	Never played.	
<i>Les Premières Armes de</i> <i>Figaro</i>	Théâtre-Déjazet	Sept. 27, 1859
<i>Paris à l'Envers</i>	Never played.	
<i>Les Gens Nerveux</i>	Palais-Royal	Nov. 4, 1859
<i>Les Pattes de Mouche</i>	Gymnase	May 15, 1860
<i>Monsieur Garat</i>	Théâtre-Déjazet	May 31, 1860
<i>Les Femmes Fortes</i>	Vaudeville	Dec. 31, 1860
<i>L'Écureuil</i>	Vaudeville	Feb. 9, 1861
<i>Piccolino</i> (comedy)	Gymnase	July 18, 1861
<i>Nos Intimes</i>	Vaudeville	Nov. 16, 1861
<i>La Papillonne</i>	Théâtre-Français	Apr. 11, 1862
<i>La Perle Noire</i>	Gymnase	Apr. 12, 1862
<i>Les Prés Saint-Gervais</i> (comedy)	Théâtre-Déjazet	Apr. 26, 1862
<i>Les Ganaches</i>	Gymnase	Oct. 29, 1862
<i>Bataille d'Amour</i> (libretto)	Opéra-Comique	Apr. 13, 1863
<i>Les Diables Noirs</i>	Vaudeville	Nov. 28, 1863
<i>Le Délégé</i>	Théâtre-Déjazet	Apr. 12, 1864
<i>Don Quichotte</i>	Gymnase	June 25, 1864
<i>Les Pommes du Voisin</i>	Palais-Royal	Oct. 15, 1864
<i>Le Capitaine Henriot</i> (li- bretto)	Opéra-Comique	Dec. 29, 1864
<i>Les Vieux Garçons</i>	Gymnase	Jan. 21, 1865
<i>La Famille Benotton</i>	Vaudeville	Nov. 4, 1865
<i>Nos Bons Villageois</i>	Gymnase	Oct. 3, 1866
<i>Maison Neuve</i>	Vaudeville	Dec. 4, 1866
<i>Séraphine</i>	Gymnase	Dec. 29, 1868

SARDOU PLAYS AND LIBRETTI

PIECE	THEATRE	DATE OF PRODUCTION
<i>Patrie</i> (drama).....	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Mar. 18, 1869
<i>Fernande</i>	Gymnase.....	Mar. 8, 1870
<i>Le Roi Carotte</i> (libretto)....	Gatté.....	Jan. 15, 1872
<i>Rabagas</i>	Vaudeville.....	Feb. 1, 1872
<i>Andréa</i>	Gymnase.....	Mar. 17, 1873
<i>L'Oncle Sam</i>	Vaudeville.....	Nov. 6, 1873
<i>Les Merveilleuses</i>	Variétés.....	Dec. 16, 1873
<i>Le Magot</i>	Palais-Royal.....	Jan. 14, 1874
<i>Les Prés Saint-Gervais</i> (opéra-bouffe libretto).....	Variétés.....	Nov. 14, 1874
<i>La Haine</i>	Gatté.....	Dec. 3, 1874
<i>Ferréol</i>	Gymnase.....	Nov. 17, 1875
<i>Piccolino</i> (comic opera libretto).....	Variétés.....	Apr. 11, 1876
<i>L'Hôtel Godelot</i>	Gymnase.....	May 13, 1876
<i>Dora</i>	Vaudeville.....	Jan. 22, 1877
<i>The Exiles</i>	Boston Theatre.....	Dec. 10, 1877
<i>Les Bourgeois de Pont-Arcy</i>	Vaudeville.....	Mar. 1, 1878
<i>Les Noces de Fernande</i> (li- bretto).....		1878
<i>André Fortier</i>	Boston Theatre.....	Mar. 11, 1879
<i>Daniel Rochat</i>	Théâtre-Français.....	Feb. 16, 1880
<i>Divorçons</i>	Palais-Royal.....	Dec. 6, 1880
<i>Odette</i>	Vaudeville.....	Nov. 17, 1881
<i>Fédora</i>	Vaudeville.....	Dec. 11, 1882
<i>Théodora</i>	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Dec. 26, 1884
<i>Georgette</i>	Vaudeville.....	Dec. 9, 1885
<i>Patrie</i> (opera libretto)....	Opera House.....	Dec. 17, 1886
<i>Le Crocodile</i>	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Dec. 21, 1886
<i>La Tosca</i>	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Nov. 24, 1887
<i>Marquise</i>	Vaudeville.....	Feb. 12, 1889
<i>Belle-Maman</i>	Gymnase.....	Mar. 15, 1889
<i>Cléopâtre</i>	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Oct. 23, 1890
<i>Thermidor</i>	Théâtre-Français.....	Jan. 24, 1891
{ <i>Les Américaines à</i>		
{ <i>l'Étranger</i>Lyceum Theatre, New York.....		
{ <i>A Woman's Silence</i>Lyceum Theatre, New York.....		
{ Both written for Daniel Frohman and produced in English.		
<i>Madame Sans-Gêne</i>	Vaudeville.....	Oct. 27, 1893
<i>Gismonda</i>	Renaissance.....	Oct. 31, 1894
<i>Marcelle</i>	Gymnase.....	Dec. 21, 1895

PIECE	THEATRE	DATE OF PRODUCTION
<i>Spiritisme</i>	Renaissance.....	Feb. 8, 1897
<i>Paméla</i>	Vaudeville.....	Feb. 11, 1898
<i>Robespierre</i>	London Lyceum.....	Apr. 15, 1899
<i>La Tosca</i> (opera libretto) . .	Rome.....	Jan. 1900
<i>La Fille de Tabarin</i> (libretto)	Opéra-Comique.....	Feb. 20, 1901
<i>Les Barbares</i> (libretto).....	Opera House.....	Oct. 23, 1901
<i>Dante</i>	Drury Lane, London..	Apr. 30, 1903
<i>La Sorcière</i>	Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt...	Dec. 15, 1903
<i>L'Espionne</i> ("Dora" re- vised and revived).....		1905
<i>Fiorella</i>	Waldorf Theatre, London...	June 7, 1905
<i>La Piste</i>	Théâtre des Variétés.....	Feb. 15, 1906
<i>L'affaire des Poisons</i>	Porte Saint-Martin.....	Dec. 7, 1907

TALES, PAMPHLETS, ETC.

Avant La Gloire.

L'Homme aux Pigeons.

La Perle Noire: roman.....1878

Discours à l'Académie.....1878

Onze Jours de Siège.

Les Vieilles Filles.

L'Heure du Spectacle.....1878

Mes Plagiats.....1882

La Maison de Robespierre (réponse à M. Hamel).....1895

The Bomb Shell: a short story first published in English. February, 1905

Together with a large number of Prefatory Notes and Introductions.

BOOKS COMMENTING ON SARDOU.

The following books have been consulted and at times drawn on for facts. In the text the author's name alone is given when quoted; here, the author, the title, and the publisher are set down in full, as some readers of this volume might desire to make note of them.

AUTHOR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
WILLIAM ARCHER...	<i>Study and Stage</i>	Ed. G. Richards.
ADOLPHE BRISSON...	<i>Portraits Intimes</i>	Ed. Colin, 5 vols.
HENRY BECQUE.....	<i>Souvenirs d'un Auteur Dramatique</i>	Ed. Bib. Art. et Lit-téraire.

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FERDINAND BRUNETTIÈRE	<i>Les Epoques du Théâtre Français</i>	Ed. Hachette et Cie.
SIR SQUIRE AND LADY BANCROFT	<i>On and Off the Stage.</i>	
JULES CLARETIE.....	<i>Victor Hugo.....</i>	Ed. Lib. Molière.
RENÉ DOUMIC.....	<i>Ecrivains d'Aujourd'hui.</i>	Ed. Perrin et Cie.
J. GEORGES DUVAL..	<i>L'Année Théâtrale.....</i>	Ed. Tresse.
EMILE FAGUET.....	<i>Notes Sur le Théâtre Contemporain</i>	Ed. Lecène & Oudin.
J. AND E. GONCOURT	<i>Journal des Goncourts...</i>	Ed. Charpentier, 7 vols.
LÉOPOLD LACOUR....	<i>Trois Théâtres.....</i>	Ed. Lévy.
GUSTAVE LARROUMET	<i>Etudes Dramatiques.....</i>	Ed. Hachette et Cie.
JULES LEMAITRE....	<i>Impressions de Théâtre..</i>	Ed. Lecène & Oudin, 10 vols.
ALPHONSE LEVEAUX.	<i>Théâtre de la Cour à Compiègne</i>	Ed. Tresse.
BRANDER MATTHEWS	<i>French Dramatists of the 19th Century</i>	Scribners.
E. MONTÉGUT.....	<i>Dramaturges et Roman-ciers</i>	Ed. Hachette et Cie.
HUGUES REBELL....	<i>Victorien Sardou</i>	Ed. Plume.
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ANDRÉ SARDOU.....	<i>Une Œuvre d'un Demi-Siècle</i>	In "Le Théâtre," 1904
GEORGE BERNARD SHAW	<i>Dramatic Opinions.....</i>	Brentano's, 2 vols.
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JAMES H. STODDART.	<i>Recollections of a Player..</i>	Century Co.
EDOUARD NOEL ET EDMOND STOULLIG }	<i>Les Annales du Théâtre..</i>	Ed. Ollendorff, 33 vols.
ED. TRESSE.....	<i>Foyers et Coulisses.....</i>	
A. B. WALKLEY.....	<i>Drama and Life.....</i>	Brentano's.
A. B. WALKLEY.....	<i>Playhouse Impressions...</i>	Fisher Unwin.
AUGUSTE VITU.....	<i>Les Mille et Une Nuits de Théâtre</i>	Ed. Ollendorff, 9 vols.
ALBERT WOLFF.....	<i>Sardou et L'Oncle Sam..</i>	Ed. Librairie Nouvelle.
<i>Théâtre de Victorien Sardou</i>	<i>Calmann-Lévy ed. 34 vols.</i>	L'Illustration ed. 9 vols.

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PART FIRST
SARDOU'S CAREER



Sardou's father, Antoine Léandre Sardou, was attending school at Cannes in 1815 when General Cambronne, of Waterloo fame, entered the place with his troops. They were confronted by a coast-guard in the Bourbon uniform, with powdered wig, cocked hat, lace ruffles, silk waistcoat embroidered with golden fleur-de-lis, and shoes with silver buckles. Brandishing his staff of office to stop the Napoleonic army, the man called in a trembling voice, "Rascals, return at once to Elba, or the King, my master, will chastise you as you deserve." The old grenadiers received this defiance with roars of laughter. The elder Sardou used often to relate this story to his son as presenting a striking picture of the New France confronted by the Old.

When Victorien Sardou came into the world, on September 7, 1831, his father had become a citizen of Paris, and occupied a modest suite of rooms in the Rue Beaudreilles, in the Faubourg St. Antoine. There Victorien's early boyhood was passed, and there, in the neighbourhood of the Place Bastille, on the scene of events still within the memory of middle-aged men, he must early have imbibed that deep interest in the great drama of the French Revolution which was destined in after-years to find expression in some of his most powerful plays.

Grandfather Sardou had served as a volunteer in 1792, and subsequently became a surgeon in the army of Italy. On the conclusion of the Napoleonic wars he retired to Le Cannet and took to growing olives for the Marseilles market. But one night in 1819 a sudden frost destroyed his trees, and, seeing the financial ruin that had overtaken his father, Antoine Léandre, then sixteen years of age, migrated to Paris to seek his fortune. He was an energetic young fellow, ready to turn his hand to any work that offered, and became successively a tutor, a bookkeeper in a house of business, and finally a schoolmaster. He had not been long at Paris when he married a Mademoiselle Viard,

the daughter of a manufacturer at Troyes. Léandre held various educational appointments at the *Ecole de Commerce et des Arts Industriels* at Charonne, and at the *Ecole Ottomane* at Paris, and elsewhere, and was also much occupied with the editing of school books and other literary work. But all his industry did not bring him much material reward, though, being a worthy man, he did not lack the esteem and affection of numerous friends. His son Victorien was thus brought up in a scholastic atmosphere, and to this fact no doubt owed much of his scholarly instincts and his feeling for history and archæology. At ten years of age Victorien had not only read the plays of Molière, but had learned them by heart, and recited them with much enthusiasm. During his boyhood two severe illnesses interrupted his studies. One of them was a lung inflammation, another a dangerous attack of scarlatina. When convalescent he was sent to Cannes to regain his strength. On his return to Paris he found that his father had removed to the other side of the river, where he had set up a school in the *Rue des Postes*, which prospered until the critical year 1848, when he was forced to close his doors.

This was the famous "Year of Revolutions," and Victorien, then in his seventeenth year, was still a pupil at the *Collège Henri IV*. Even in those early days he felt impelled to write, and there is still in existence a curious diary in which the boy Victorien recorded his impressions of those agitated times. The entries under the date of June 22 and June 23, 1848, afford some personal glimpses. Louis Philippe abdicated on February 24th, and he and his minister Guizot were now safe in England. On February 26th the Second Republic was proclaimed, and a Provisional Government set up, controlled by a new "National Assembly." The tone of the nine hundred members composing this body was moderate—indeed, too moderate for the revolutionary elements of the faubourgs; and, unfortu-

nately, the economic policy they adopted was radically unsound. To relieve the prevailing distress and discontent, they set up great "National Workshops" at Paris. Those who secured work were to receive two francs, while those for whom work could not be provided were entitled to one and a half francs per day. The dictates of economic prudence were thus thrown to the winds, and disaster followed. The needy and desperate were drawn, as by some great magnet, from every corner of France to Paris. It was found impossible to furnish work for all, and soon the mutterings of a storm were heard. Young Sardou thus had a personal glimpse of revolution. In this diary he tells us how he and a schoolfellow went, on the evening of Thursday, June 22, to the Place du Panthéon, after dinner, and there heard a mob orator addressing the crowd. The man wound up with the words: "Then, it is agreed . . . all, to-morrow morning meet here at eight o'clock, and we will march to the Assembly with arms!"

The boys went home and to bed in a high state of excitement, wondering what the morrow would bring. Next morning, at a quarter before eight, Victorien duly sallied forth for school. On the way he met another schoolfellow, and the result of the conversation that ensued was a determination to play truant that day.

The boys rambled about the city, visiting all the radical quarters, but to their disappointment all was quiet. On their way back they entered the Church of St. Etienne, near Sardou's home in the Rue des Postes. Monseigneur Affre, the Archbishop of Paris, was holding a confirmation service in the church. On his return Victorien found the household in a state of agitation over the news of barricades and mobs. Sardou Père donned his uniform as a member of the National Guard, and, taking his musket, sallied forth, but returned within three minutes. He had met a

comrade returning without his gun. The summons to the Place du Panthéon which he had hastened to obey was only a trap to disarm the defenders of the peace. But, though the boys saw nothing of importance, this 23d of June was the first of three terrible days of bloodshed. Two days later the good Archbishop whom they had seen in the church that morning, was mortally wounded by a musket-ball at the large barricade in the Place de la Bastille while he was making a noble effort to still the passions of the mob. In their home in the Rue des Postes the Sardous heard the rattle of musketry and an occasional boom of cannon, but the desperate fighting which ensued in other quarters of the city came no nearer that day.

On the morning of Saturday, June 24, the Sardou household awoke to the sound of firing as near as the Panthéon. Sardou Père closed the shutters, laid in a stock of provisions, and arranged for a flight to the rear in case of emergency. There were two barricades in the immediate vicinity. One at the entrance of the Rue des Fossés-Saint-Jacques had been stormed, and was now held by the soldiers of the regular army. Another strong barricade at the corner where the Rue de la Vieille Estrapade and the Rue d'Ulm meet was still in the hands of the insurgents. In fact, the Sardous were in the thick of a regular battle. From time to time Victorien rushed into his room to write up his diary, "thinking that it might be valuable to me some day;" here we may note his foresight even in boyhood. The rest of the day was spent on the roof with his companions. By climbing through to the attic windows they could even see the insurgents' barricade, and once Victorien had quite an adventure to record in his notes:

"One of my friends was smoking. A shot was fired; whence, I know not. The defenders of the barricade simply looked up, and, misled, no doubt, by the tobacco smoke, greeted it with a salvo of shot. Our curious friends had only just time to drop

on all fours and scuttle back into the attic, dragging one another by the legs. My father was furious; he closed the skylights, forbade any one to enter the attics, and said that if the quarter remained in the hands of the insurgents it was enough to cause us all to be murdered."

The fusillade lasted till late in the afternoon. From their coign of vantage on the roof the Sardous could watch the insurgent sharpshooters creeping down their street to fire at the soldiery. At last the revolutionists were repulsed at all points, though the firing was still kept up. Finally a cannon was brought up from the Panthéon. The watchers heard a general officer call upon the mob to surrender. A refusal was the sole response. The roar of a cannon shot was heard. No second one was necessary, for the barricade was immediately stormed and the noise of the conflict gradually died away in the distance. The inhabitants of the streets in that neighbourhood then ventured out to count their broken windows and to search for the bullet-marks on their walls and the splashes of blood on their pavements. There was one more alarm. All rushed indoors again, but finally, by nine o'clock in the evening, absolute tranquillity reigned, with the military in full possession of that quarter of the city and the Place du Panthéon lit up by the lurid glow of their watchfires.

One day in 1852 the elder Sardou asked his son Victorien—who was now twenty-one, and had just finished his course at the Collège Henri IV.—what calling in life he would prefer to adopt. When Victorien replied "literature," his father cynically remarked: "All idlers say the same thing." Léandre Sardou, who had intended to make a schoolmaster of Victorien, was disappointed with his son's career at college. He had won no honours and carried off no prizes. The father was determined that his son should follow some useful profession. Victorien was cornered,

and, being forced to choose some profession other than literature, selected medicine.

Young Sardou installed himself in a miserable garret in the Quai aux Fleurs, and for eighteen months walked the wards of the Necker Hospital under the famous surgeon Dr. Lenoir. He paid slight attention, however, to the clinical lectures and the operations of great surgeons; while listening to disquisitions on anatomy his thoughts used to wander to poetry and the stage. And yet the contemporary stage was by no means pleasing to his youthful fancy. On one or two occasions, when he visited the theatre with his father, he had returned with a marked contempt for what he had seen. At that time no playwright appealed to him except Victor Hugo. The young man was ambitious, his ideas were on a lofty plane. He did not care for the ordinary prose drama, but preferred Shakespearian tragedies in verse.

Before Victorien had completed his course at the hospital, however, he had the misfortune to lose two sisters, and, to complete his troubles, his father fell into pecuniary difficulties, forsook Paris, and returned to his home in the sunny South, where he began life over again, struggling valiantly to pay his debts.

CHAPTER II

EARLY STRUGGLES AND FAILURES

His father's departure from Paris left Victorien alone in the great city, utterly without means. He was deprived even of the bed and board which he had always found in his father's house. He therefore found it necessary to share with a fellow medical student his poor garret in the Quai aux Fleurs, near the Pont Notre Dame. In a conspicuous place in his study, years afterward, he still had a water-colour to which he often called the attention of visitors:

"This picture represents the old Bridge of Notre Dame with the tall and narrow houses clinging to its sides. It was contemporaneous with Louis XVI. When I was living near the Quai Napoléon, these buildings had nearly all disappeared, but vestiges of them were still visible from my garret windows. Every morning I went down into the street and purchased some boiled potatoes from the peripatetic vendor at the corner, and while devouring my humble breakfast I used to join the anglers who were casting their lines along the Quai. One I remember well—he was a red-haired fellow who had played a leading part in the massacres of the Reign of Terror. His stories sometimes made me think of incorporating them in a play for the stage. In fact, it was at this time that I first turned my thoughts in the direction of play-writing."

One night, during this time of bitter privation, young Sardou, pale, thin, and shabby, was wandering in stormy weather in the vicinity of the Medical School of Paris. Fortune had not been kind to him, and he was vaguely meditating suicide. To shelter himself from the rain he went under the doorway of an unfinished building, leaving it in a few moments. A water-carrier promptly took the place of shelter thus vacated, audibly remarking: "Ah,

mon ami, you don't know when you are well off." The words were scarcely out his mouth, when a block of granite fell with a crash and killed him. Even then Sardou was superstitious, and believing from this accident that he had yet room to hope, went home and again took up his pen.

Sardou set vigorously to work. He composed melodramas, comedies, and tragedies. Two pieces flowed from his pen in these his salad days. The first was "*Les Amis Imaginaires*," a two-act piece in the style of Picard, a dramatist of the First Empire; in this piece we find the first idea of "*Nos Intimes*." The second was "*Queen Ulfra*," a Swedish drama in which the princess spoke in alexandrines while the ministers and common people were given shorter verses proportioned to their rank; this dramatic freak was never repeated. He also planned an ambitious play of the time of the Reformation; it was to require three evenings of playing time, to be called respectively "*Luther*," "*The Peasants' War*," and "*The Anabaptists*." Naturally, he could find no manager anxious to put on his three-night drama. Undismayed, and in spite of the financial straits to which he had been reduced, he devoted his time to the completion of "*Queen Ulfra*." When his piece was finished he dedicated it to Mlle. Rachel, at that time the reigning tragédienne, and took it to Chotel, the director of the Belleville Theatre in the suburbs of Paris, who had in his younger days accompanied Rachel in her tours in the provinces as an actor. Sardou himself had never even seen Rachel, and had no right to feel disappointment at her not finding "*Queen Ulfra*" to her taste. "Let your friend write me a Greek tragedy, and we shall see," was the answer brought back by Chotel.

But once more the hopes of the budding dramatist were revived by a strange adventure that befell his play. He was informed by an acquaintance—a dealer in umbrellas who kept house for M. Romieu, the Director of Fine Arts—

that a Mlle. Desfossés might possibly be induced to appear in his play. Romieu, being in debt and hard pressed by his creditors, lived in a suite of rooms in the Rue Laval, which he had engaged in the name of his umbrella-dealer housekeeper. Like Molière's housekeeper, she shone with a borrowed lustre reflected from her influential employer, and people sought to win her ear in order to reach Romieu. Among others the young actress Desfossés, who was about to make her debut at the Théâtre-Français, was naturally eager to secure the patronage of the Director. It was in this roundabout way that Sardou had hopes of placing his first play. In fact the story goes that when Sardou brought his play to Romieu's apartment the housekeeper said to him curtly: "Yes, Mlle. Desfossés will be here presently. You may leave your play. *We* will read it."

The play was read, and Mlle. Desfossés produced it. But this rival of Rachel, of whom readers may now hear for the first time, made a colossal fiasco. "What can be the cause of the failure?" asked the author. "It is simple enough," replied the vendor of umbrellas, "it is that nasty Rachel. She got up a cabal against Mlle. Desfossés, and organised all the opera-glass peddlers in Paris into a clique to hiss her down. But Desfossés got even with the nasty Jewess after the performance. She said: 'Why, that was not an audience, it was a synagogue!'"

Such, at any rate, was the story that went the round of Paris. Some of the details may be apocryphal. But it is certain that Sardou wrote "Queen Ulfra," that he had dreams of seeing it acted, and that his hopes were dashed to the ground. Mlle. Desfossés did not stay at the Théâtre-Français, but suddenly left Paris, and the theatrical world knew her no more.

The fiasco of "La Reine Ulfra" was a sore disappointment, but the young author was not left long without a revival of hope. In the course of the next few days he received a welcome intimation that a play of his had been

accepted at the Odéon. This was the "Taverne des Etudiants."

Before we follow the fortunes of this famous piece we must return to see how the author was faring in the meantime. Sardou never doubted of the final success of this new production, but he was at his wits' end to find the wherewithal to pay his rent and to purchase clothes, were it only in order to be sufficiently well-dressed to call on the manager of the Odéon when that gentleman should deign to send for him. To supply his necessities he accepted everything that presented itself in the way of employment. He became copyist, bookseller's clerk, and professor of languages. When he succeeded in procuring an appointment to undertake the educational charge of a young Turkish gentleman on the understanding that he was to give three lessons a week at five francs a lesson, he thought that fortune was knocking at his door. "He was called Skander Bey," related Sardou. "He was the son of an ex-officer of the Empire who had gone to Egypt to organise the cavalry of Ibrahim Bey. He went there a French colonel, but soon blossomed out into an Egyptian Pasha. Of all my pupils at that time my recollections of his son are the most agreeable. When we parted we shed tears and swore eternal friendship."

Many years later, in 1869, when the Khedive gave his magnificent fêtes to inaugurate the Suez Canal, Sardou was urged by Edmond About and other friends to visit Egypt, but was unable to carry out the suggestion. "I cannot accompany you," he said, "but I will give you letters of introduction to Skander Bey, a young Pasha, who was a pupil of mine and who is one of my dearest friends. He will receive you royally." On their return he inquired of his friends about their reception, not doubting that they would grow enthusiastic over Mahometan hospitality. But he was wrong. "Your friend Skander Bey!" cried About. "Don't talk to me of your Moslem friends. He drove us

out of the door, calling us Christian dogs, and threatening to have us bastinadoed if we darkened his door again." It was evident that the western teaching of Sardou had not sunk very deep into the oriental mind of Skander Bey, who had become a more bigoted Moslem than his father.

In later years, when talking of his youth, Sardou would often seize paper and pencil and rapidly sketch out lines which evolved themselves into a complicated map; streets, squares, and buildings grew under his deft pencil. It was a map of that portion of Paris which is called "the City," as it existed before the wholesale demolitions of Napoleon III. Around Notre Dame there was then a maze of narrow streets with ancient houses overhanging the footway. The street lamps on which aristocrats had been hanged and the gutters in which their blood had run were still pointed out in the quarter near the Temple. When young Sardou was haunting that part of Paris, this scenery and stage setting of the days of the Revolution were still all in place. The marked taste which he showed in his maturer years for dramatic archæology, and his historical plays of those troublous times, evidently originated in his walks and talks in that quarter during his youth. He often used to say with a sigh: "The Old Paris of my youth no longer exists. Some of it might surely have been saved by its very picturesqueness. But our sanitarians and architects know no pity."

One morning Sardou was breakfasting at the Hôtel de Ville with Baron Haussmann. The playwright had already won fame, and his host was questioning him upon the hardships of his youth. Sardou led him to the window: "Look!" said he, "I am going to show you the garret in which I lived near the Quai Napoléon." But he sought in vain at the corner by the Pont Notre Dame for the house where he had been at once so happy and so wretched. It had been torn down, and the workmen were at that very

moment carting away the débris. Sardou sighed as he pointed out to the Baron the masses of stone and brick and the blackened beams heaped up in the ruins. "Look," said he, "it is my youth that you are destroying."

To return to the "Students' Tavern," it was in verse, and the placing of this play by an unknown writer was said to be due to Camille Doucet, the Director of Stage Affairs in the Ministry of that time under the Second Empire. The Odéon was then under the management of Alphonse Royer and Gustave Vaëz. Doucet—(so ran the story which gained credence among the students)—recommended Sardou and his play to these gentlemen, and it was accepted. In all probability, however, the acceptance of "La Taverne," was accidental. M. Vaëz, on leaving the theatre with his friend Mlle. Bérengère, chanced to turn over the heap of plays submitted for approval. The lady was struck by Sardou's fine handwriting, and on glancing at the manuscript noticed some telling points. She had no difficulty in inducing Vaëz to read the piece. It was approved and finally accepted in compliance with the general policy favoured by Camille Doucet of encouraging budding talent.

Sardou himself thus related his meeting with Constant, the Cerberus of the Odéon Theatre, when he submitted his manuscript in October, 1853, facing this gruff challenge:

"Whom do you want to see, young man?"

"The Director," replied Sardou.

"What for?"

"To hand him a play."

"I'm sorry for you, young man. Since this morning we have already received more than two hundred plays. Put your play on the heap."

"But," objected Sardou, "I do not want to put my play on the heap."

"Well, take it away to-day or to-morrow; it's all the same thing, for you'll have to take it away some time or other."

But the cynical Constant was mistaken. Sardou did not take away "The Students' Tavern." The piece was accepted and produced. It was also damned, and the terrible failure of the play is one of the traditions of dramatic Paris. Altogether apart from the intrinsic qualities of "The Students' Tavern," there were various reasons for its failure. These were partly political. It is a curious element in Sardou's career that the success or failure of his plays should so often have hinged upon political issues.

At that time the Odéon Theatre was familiarly called the "Second Théâtre-Français," for it had been placed upon the list of subsidised houses. Director Doucet was a member of the Emperor's household. Thus a household official of the Empire was generally believed to be responsible for the recommendation of this young author to the managers of a subsidised theatre. The fact alone was enough to rouse against him the animosity of all the ardent youths of the Latin Quarter. The studentry are always in opposition. So high had their feelings risen that before the piece was actually played it was rumoured in all the cafés of the quarter that it had been written to order against the students and paid for with money out of the imperial purse.

The fatal evening came, Saturday, April 1, 1854. The curtain rose on an audience already waiting to hiss, a circumstance not unknown in the history of the French stage and which befell Sardou more than once. The exasperation of the students had been inflamed by a tactless proceeding on the part of the management. When Sardou handed in his play its title was simply "La Taverne." "But to my disgust," related Sardou, "with a view to drawing the students of the Quartier Latin to the Odéon, the managers added the words 'des Etudiants.'" By this addition the students were naturally confirmed in their belief that the play was directed against themselves. The house was packed with students, and no sooner had the curtain risen

than a storm of yells and hooting burst forth. Two lines occurring early in the play:

"On n'a plus de jeunesse, on n'a plus de pudeur,
Et l'on se croit savant, et l'on se croit penseur,"

were judged to be specially insulting. The uproar never ceased until the curtain was lowered. On Monday, the night of the second performance, the same turmoil. The students even went so far as to turn the gas off. After this the piece was summarily withdrawn. Its failure had been disastrous.

Sheridan, when receiving the sympathy of some Job's comforter, was asked: "Can anything be worse than a damned play?" He replied: "Yes, a d——d fool." But even past-masters in stagecraft like Dumas the Younger and Sardou, when in their prime, have had to feel the mortification of failure. How much more bitter then must have been the vexation of young Victorien over the failure of what was practically his first play! Not only were all his hopes of that particular play blighted, but for the nonce it closed all stage doors against him.

CHAPTER III

TREACHEROUS COLLABORATORS, QUARRELS, MORE FAILURES

FOR a time the failure of "The Students' Tavern" kept the stage doors closed to Sardou, but at last one door was put slightly on the jar again. Oddly enough, it was that of the Odéon, and it was M. Vaëz, one of the managers who had produced the luckless "Students' Tavern," who was disposed to give Sardou another chance. The young playwright set to work on another piece, "Bernard Palissy." It was composed in verse, for apparently Sardou still disdained prose. Unfortunately, he knew little of the practical side of the stage. Like most beginners, he believed that the literary qualities of a play were the most important. He did not know that a good acting play may be by no means a model of good style, but no matter how well written a bad acting play may be, it will never really succeed. Sardou had his eyes opened by the plays of Scribe. At that day it was the fashion among the younger literary men to sneer at Scribe—as it is to-day, by the way, to sneer at Sardou. Scribe was called a "pot-boiler," a maker of mechanical plays, a man who wrote scenes to fit scenery, and a maker of plots rather than of plays. Appalling tales were told of him by unsuccessful playwrights. It was whispered that he sucked the brains of other men, purchased ideas, revamped them, and thus acquired the large fortune which he was then enjoying. How they accounted for the fact that with the ideas of unsuccessful playwrights he made successful plays, tradition does not tell. But all were agreed that Scribe was mediocre, that his success was accidental, and that he was a miser. Albert Wolff gives these details of the opinions held with regard to Scribe in the fifties, and adds this anecdote:

"The only influential man I knew in Paris" [said Sardou] "was Dumas the Elder. One day I said to him: 'Won't you give me a letter of introduction to Scribe the playwright?' 'Scribe?' said the great romancer, 'who is Scribe? I never heard of him.' I sighed, and determined to see Scribe without the letter. So I called at his house that very day, and was at once received. 'Pardon my intrusion,' I said, 'but I had expected to bring a letter of introduction to you from M. Alexandre Dumas, the celebrated romancer.' 'Dumas?' interrupted Scribe, 'never heard of him; who is Dumas?'"

As Albert Wolff tells this story seriously, it may be true that these two famous Frenchmen were working in the same city at the same time without even hearing of one another.

Sardou was too sensible a man to be affected by this cheap depreciation of Scribe. The first and second pieces of Scribe that he saw had such a profound effect upon him that he began to study the works of the master. They were a revelation to him. He began a methodical system of analysis of Scribe's plays. For instance, he would read the first act of a play and stop there; write the remainder himself, and then compare his work with Scribe's; or he would begin in the middle of a play, and endeavour from reading one act to construct what had gone before and what was to follow. He thus acquired that stagecraft which so puzzled the critics of his earlier plays, for it is usually the fruit of long experience.

While he was thus studying the rudiments of his art he was waiting impatiently for the production of his play "Bernard Palissy." It was lying, buried in dust, in the pigeon-holes of the Odéon, which house was, as we have seen, managed at that time by Alphonse Royer and Gustave Vaëz. Many years afterwards, when the Odéon was in other hands, Sardou was able to trace the fate of his luckless

"Palissy." The play-register of the theatre was shown to him by La Rounat, Royer's successor. Against "Palissy" in Vaëz's handwriting stood the word "*accepted*." Royer had erased "*accepted*" and substituted "*declined*," and this not once but twice. It is needless to add that "Bernard Palissy" was never played.

Sardou managed for a time to live by writing articles for a biographical dictionary whose editor was struck by his profound knowledge of the sixteenth century. This knowledge had been acquired by Sardou's five-years' study of that period while he was working at his proposed tragedy on the Reformation. Each article for this dictionary required a month of research in libraries and thirty days of hard labour, which brought him in exactly one franc a day. He preserved an unfinished sketch of the life of Erasmus, which for years he kept as a relic of the struggles of his youth. After this biographical work he succeeded in obtaining a couple of pupils, from each of whom he received two and a half francs a day, walking to the house of one of them, two miles, in order to save the omnibus fare. One lesson was given in the morning, an important consideration to him, for his pupil frequently invited him to luncheon, which saved the expense of a dinner; for at that time Sardou looked upon dinner, on the days when he had taken luncheon, as a wild extravagance.

While the play of "Bernard Palissy" was mouldering in the pigeon-holes of the Odéon, an old actor named Boudeville proposed to Sardou to introduce him and his plays to Paul Féval. After the performance of the famous five-act drama of "The Hunchback," or "Le Bossu," at the Porte Saint-Martin on September 8, 1862, a long dispute arose with the collaborators, Anicet-Bourgeois and Paul Féval, neither of whom denied that Sardou had something to do with the play in this obscure period of his life. As a matter of fact, Sardou came to Féval in order to in-

terest him in his play "Fleur de Liane," the scene of which was laid in Canada, and to suggest the idea of adapting Féval's famous novel "Le Bossu," published in 1858, for the stage. He was careful to take with him a scenario, or full outline, of his proposed dramatic version.

It so happened that Féval was looking out for something of the kind, and readily fell in with the plan. The actor Fechter had come to Féval requiring from him one of those peculiar plays in which the player has to appear in various characters, somewhat after the fashion of what is called in stage slang a "lightning-change artist." Féval and Fechter began racking their brains for some character of this type, and finally agreed that the famous humpback Lagardère afforded a promising subject. Tradition says that at the time of the John Law speculation fever Lagardère made a fortune by letting his hump as a writing desk to speculators in the Rue Quincampoix. But instead of giving Sardou the benefit of his suggestions, Féval preferred to collaborate with Anicet-Bourgeois, then at the height of his reputation. It is believed that Féval and Bourgeois did not hesitate to avail themselves of Sardou's scenario. Such was the genesis of what eventually proved to be Féval's only successful play. However that may be, a fierce quarrel broke out. In a violent article which he published in the *Figaro* in 1866, some three years after the production of his play, Paul Féval depicted Sardou in the most unflattering colours. With a lamentable lack of generosity he drew a picture of him at the time when, humble, shabbily dressed, and shivering with cold, Sardou came to warm himself at the fireplace of the prosperous novelist. Sardou did not hesitate to attack Féval with equal vigour in the same journal, and the quarrel became a famous one. This polemic became very bitter before it concluded, and first disclosed the hitherto unknown fact of Sardou's collaboration. If we accept the story of the

original scenario brought by Sardou, there have been three versions of the story for the stage, the second being that by Anicet-Bourgeois and Féval performed in 1862. The third, also based on Féval's novel, was "Le Bossu," a comic opera in four acts by Henri Bocage and Arnaud Liorat, with music by Charles Grisart, which was produced at the Gaité on March 19, 1888.

Such is the generally accepted and most probable version of what occurred. Another account put forth by some of Sardou's friends is that the scenario brought by him was actually elaborated into the play of "Le Bossu" by Féval and Sardou in collaboration. But unfortunately they could not succeed in placing it at the Porte Saint-Martin Theatre, the manager of which, Marc Fournier, did not even read it. Féval became discouraged, and converted the play into a long novel, which was published in serial form and made a great hit in 1858, though neither from the play nor from the novel did his young collaborator draw a penny of royalty. Féval was prosperous enough to wait for the play, but Sardou, who was living on a few francs a day by giving lessons, could not afford delay. At least five English dramatic versions were made of this play. The most recent (1908) is by Justin Huntly McCarthy under the old title "The Duke's Motto." To add to its curious history, out of the play which was made out of a novel Mr. McCarthy has also written a novel made out of the play.

Five or six months passed, and Sardou still had hopes of producing his Canadian play. In fact, "Fleur de Liane" was actually accepted by Charles Desnoyers at the Ambigu. But, unfortunately for the author, this manager died soon afterward, and his successor mislaid the manuscript.

Three years had now passed since the failure of "The Students' Tavern." "Bernard Palissy" was still unplayed, and Sardou could no longer count on "Le Bossu." At this moment another avenue of employment was suddenly

opened for him. The composer A. Gevaert consented to let Sardou write the libretto for his opera "Le Capitaine Henriot." But to the young man's disappointment one day his friend Prilleux said to him: "Sardou, I see you are continually with Gevaert. You think he is going to collaborate with you in 'Le Capitaine Henriot'? You don't know him. He is good-natured, and does not wish to hurt your feelings by sending you to the right-about at once; but, depend upon it, he will have nothing to do with a man who has made so many failures as you. You began with a failure, and as yet you have scored no success. You are only losing your time with him." What Prilleux said was too true. The composer did not care to venture his own reputation with the unsuccessful Sardou, and the opera of "Le Capitaine Henriot" was not produced until several years afterwards, in 1864, when Sardou himself had achieved success and was far more famous than the composer. There was no hope at the Odéon, "The Hunchback" was apparently shelved, the manager of the Ambigu was dead, and Gevaert was playing him false with "Le Capitaine Henriot."

CHAPTER IV

HIS FIRST SUCCESS

WHEN things were at their gloomiest, fate suddenly threw in Sardou's way the chance that was eventually to lead to success. In 1857 he was living in a garret in deep distress. He contracted typhoid fever and was at death's door. By a marvellous stroke of good fortune he found a devoted nurse in a Mlle. Moisson de Brécourt, who lived with her mother on another floor of the same house. This lady was a young actress who played under the name of Laurentine Léon. She no sooner heard that the shabby young man whom she had so often met on the staircase was dangerously ill than she installed herself as his nurse, and succeeded so well that the sick man was restored to health and vigour. In the following year his gentle little nurse became Madame Sardou, and proved a devoted wife till her death, nine years afterward, in 1867. Her married life was short, but she at least lived to see her husband in full possession of fame and fortune.

Mlle. de Brécourt happened to be acquainted with the famous actress Pauline Virginie Déjazet, who was then engaged at the Théâtre des Variétés under the management of the Cogniards. She therefore came to Sardou in time to reanimate his courage with the suggestion:

"Why do you not address yourself to Déjazet, who is always bemoaning the fact that no one will write anything for her?"

"Because I do not know her."

"But I do. I will give you a letter of introduction to Déjazet. But have you a rôle for her?"

"I have better than a rôle; I have a play."

Nearly four years had now passed since the failure of

"La Taverne des Etudiants," and Sardou had knocked in vain at many doors. However, next day—it was a bright sunny morning in October, 1857—he took his friend's advice, and set out for Déjazet's residence at Seine-Porte. As he said in after years, everything seemed to smile upon him. When he reached the place he found the gate open as though to invite him in. A smiling maid received him, and even the garden seemed to smile a welcome. To use his own words, it seemed to be his "début on the high-road to success." It was indeed the lot of Déjazet to give the young playwright his start. In spite of his previous failures, she seemed to divine his talents.

Virginie Déjazet received the unknown Sardou in her drawing-room without ceremony, her hands still white with the plaster with which she had been repairing her garden wall. She greeted him with kindness and good nature. Sardou summoned up courage to plead his case urgently, and, as the title of the play he had brought with him was "Candide," he did not forget to hint how piquant it would be to see Déjazet collaborating with Voltaire. This was an allusion to the Sage of Ferney's incomparable satirical tale "Candide, ou l'Optimisme," written in 1758, on which indeed the play was founded. She read the letter of introduction from Laurentine Léon, who was then playing minor parts at the Odéon, and at once promised to read his play. The letter appealed to the sympathy of the great comedienne on behalf of an unfortunate author and begged her to read a piece he had composed for her.

"A piece for me," cried Déjazet, interested, "how many acts?"

"Five, mademoiselle."

Having read and approved, she went from manager to manager with the manuscript, but despite her fame and zeal she could not find one brave enough to make the venture. Even the Cogniards declined it. The scenes of "Candide"

were laid in Germany, France, Spain, Turkey, and Venice, and the cost of staging such a play was altogether prohibitive. "What is the use of mounting a five-act piece with expensive costumes and scenery, when Déjazet is making four thousand francs every evening with the 'Chant de Béranger,' which lasts only forty minutes?" Moreover, the managers were getting somewhat tired of Déjazet, who shortly afterward left the Variétés and opened the Theatre-Déjazet on her own account, on September 17, 1859, with Sardou's next venture, "Les Premières Armes de Figaro."

But to return to "Candide." Every manager made the same reply to the importunities of Déjazet, that he would not dare to put on a piece by an author who had failed so disastrously. One of the managers kept "Candide" for six months, and finally, when pressed by Déjazet and Sardou for his decision, returned the play with the remark that he did not believe that Sardou had any talent whatever, and that a manager would only injure his theatre by putting on a piece by so unsuccessful an author. Five years later, when Sardou had become famous, this same manager came to him and begged him to write a play.

For the past seven years Déjazet had been roaming from theatre to theatre, and her friends were anxious that at the age of sixty she should settle down in a house of her own. She had saved 120,000 francs in all, and it was daring of her to embark her little capital in a theatrical enterprise. But her confidence in her own powers encouraged her to face the risk, and when in the summer of 1859 the lease of the small Folies-Nouvelles in the Boulevard du Temple was offered for sale she acquired it for the very sum of 120,000 francs. Her original intention had been to open with "Candide," but the piece was prohibited by the censors, and as Déjazet was working without any reserve of capital, and an initial failure meant disaster, she had recourse again to the man in whom she felt confidence.

Sardou had not been dismayed by the rejection of "Candide" at all the theatres and its interdiction by the censors, but taking up at Déjazet's request the outline of a piece by the old playwright Emile Vanderburch, worked it up into a comedy; and he so utterly transformed it that Vanderburch, who was present at the reading of the play, failed to recognise his own child. Unlike "Candide," this piece was inexpensive to mount, and when it had been offered to the Cogniards and declined, Déjazet had no hesitation in adopting it to inaugurate her new house. "Les Premières Armes de Figaro" achieved a great success. The brilliancy of the comedy was, however, entirely due to the sparkling dialogue furnished by Sardou, for the scheme of the play as outlined by Vanderburch was singularly defective.

The next piece prepared by Sardou was taken by Laurentine Léon, the future Madame Sardou, to Montigny, the manager of the Gymnase. It was called "Paris à l'Envers." Montigny was much struck by the talent shown in this piece, and sent for the author.

"I cannot put your piece upon my stage because it is not suited to the Gymnase. But allow me to submit it to Scribe. Let us see what he has to say about it."

Scribe read the play, and returned it to Montigny with a most cruel letter. There was in the fourth act a love scene which shocked the old playwright. He who had brought so many couples together upon the stage could not understand that any playwright could present the grand passion under any other aspect. He regarded the scene as scandalous ["immonde"], believed that audiences would not stand it, and wound up his letter by saying that this particular scene was the worst kind of literature, and what was worse, that it was not dramatic literature. Yet five or six years afterward this very scene was played, and made the phenomenal success of "Nos Intimes."

Some months afterward, Sardou brought another play, "Les Gens Nerveux," in four acts, to the manager of the Gymnase. Montigny read it and said: "I will give you a piece of advice. Go and see Théodore Barrière. This play is very much after his style of bright comedy. I think that you and he together will make a great success of it."

The author of "Les Faux Bonshommes" received Sardou kindly, read the piece, and reported: "It is not suited to the Gymnase. You must give it to the Palais-Royal." It so happened that Barrière had promised, but not yet finished, a piece for this house. He jumped at the "Gens Nerveux." In two days he cut out all the passages specially written for the Gymnase. It was the first and last time that the two men collaborated, for they contrived to quarrel over the work. "Les Gens Nerveux" was produced on November 4, 1859, and achieved only a partial success.

Montigny, too, was disappointed at the transfer of "Les Gens Nerveux" to a rival house, and told Sardou that when he sent him to Barrière he had no intention of presenting the play to the Palais-Royal, but merely wanted to improve it for the Gymnase.

Sardou's reply was consolatory. "Do not trouble about that. Here are three acts of another play which I had handed over to Fargueil for *Lurine*, the manager of the Vaudeville. When I went to recover my manuscript, Boiëldieu, the secretary, found it mislaid in a corner. Here it is."

"This time," said Montigny, when he had read the play, "you have no need of a collaborator."

The new play, which was produced at the Gymnase on May 15, 1860, was the famous "Les Pattes de Mouche" (known in English as "A Scrap of Paper"), the first acknowledged masterpiece of Victorien Sardou. His earlier pieces were to Sardou what "L'Etourdi" and "Le Dépit Amoureux" were to Molière, a promise of better things to

come and not in themselves an achievement. It revealed both the strong and the weak points of the author, his astonishing skill in construction due in all probability to his patient analysis of Scribe's work, his lack of emotional depth, the witty dialogue in which he excels, and his skill in hitting off the shortcomings of his contemporaries. The great success achieved by "*Les Pattes de Mouche*" proved a turning point in his career. "If I fail," said the author when he heard that his play had been accepted, "I shall start to-morrow for the United States and try my luck at journalism." The intrinsic merits of the play and the splendid interpretation which it received from M. Lafontaine and Mme. Rose Chéri insured a triumph. In view of this success Sardou abandoned all thoughts of seeking fortune in any other country than his own.

Apropos of its revival, years afterward Sardou told how he came to conceive one of the chief features of "*Les Pattes de Mouche*." The story is typical of the playwright, who always had a keen eye for the dramatic possibilities of apparently trivial incidents which he treasured up in his *dossiers* for future use. One day, when calling at his tobacconist's near the Théâtre-Beaumarchais, he picked up a scrap of paper to light his cigar. The paper turned out to be a letter from the actress Marie Laurent to her son, then a scholar at the Lycée Versailles. This loving letter, which Sardou preserved as one of his most treasured possessions, also suggested a type of devoted mother which is not infrequently to be found in his plays. The subsequent development of the idea was influenced by the tales of Edgar Allan Poe, which always had a special attraction for him by reason of their imaginative power, their sensational incidents, and the skill displayed in their construction. It is certain that "*The Purloined Letter*" suggested the ingenious idea of the obvious hiding-place, and in all probability "*The Gold Bug*" (in England known as "*The*

Golden Beetle") had some unconscious connection with Thirion's scarab in the third act. It may be remarked that letters play an important part in several of Sardou's plays, and certain of his critics never tired of reproaching him with the employment of stale devices whenever, as in "Séraphine," "Dora," and "Fernande," he makes the action hinge on the adventures of a letter. In fact, Mr. A. B. Walkley, critic of the *London Times*, once rather flippantly said that this was Sardou's only claim to be called a man of letters.

"Les Pattes de Mouche" was composed before Sardou had emerged from the garret stage of his existence. "I recall with pleasure," he wrote to a friend, "the hours I spent in scribbling and erasing during the scorching summer weather in my quarters under the roof. The ceiling was so low that to breathe fresh air in comfort and to have a good light for my work I had to push my table under the skylight which lit up this den, and thrusting my head under the glazed window sash, write with my hand inside the attic and my forehead resting outside on the tiles. All these things make me smile to-day, but they did not make me weep even then."

Having finished the work to his satisfaction, he wrote it out in his best handwriting and handed his manuscript to Anna Fargueil, for whom he had written the part of Suzanne. The reader may remember how the author's handwriting stood him in good stead in the case of "La Taverne des Etudiants" with Gustave Vaëz and Mlle. Bérengère. It had been arranged that Mlle. Fargueil was to give it to Lurine, then manager of the Vaudeville, with warm recommendations.

Sardou waited in vain for a decision. Months passed, until at last, exasperated by delay, he called on Boiëldieu, the secretary of the theatre. This gentleman was cold and phlegmatic, but polite.

"What do you want?"

"My manuscript."

"What manuscript?"

"That of a play which Mlle. Fargueil handed to M. Lurine some months ago."

"What is your name?"

"Sardou. Don't trouble to hunt up my record. I have been hissed at the Odéon and somewhat roughly used at the Palais-Royal together with my collaborator Barrière, but, thanks to Déjazet, I had a success with 'Les Premières Armes de Figaro.'"

"Ah, yes. I know. What is the title of your play?"

"'Les Pattes de Mouche.'"

Boiëldieu then lapsed into silence, broke into a smile of vague pity, and at last said:

"Ah! I have some recollection of it. Yes, it is true that the manuscript was handed to me, but M. Lurine has not yet had time to read it."

"Well, if he has not found time in three months, he never will. Be good enough to give me back my manuscript."

Sardou thus continues the narrative: "All this time Boiëldieu was fumbling among his papers, opening drawers, and rummaging in pigeon-holes. At last under a heap of manuscripts he found mine. Then hesitating for a moment to give it back to me, said:

"'Look here, leave it with me. I promise that M. Lurine shall have read it before forty-eight hours are passed.'"

"I declined, and taking my roll of paper, jumped into a cab and drove to Passy, where Montigny lived. He knew me well. He had already declined two pieces of mine, and he was right. But at least he had taken the trouble to read them."

Manager Montigny was a man of somewhat gruff exterior, but at bottom good-hearted enough. He had proved

failure as comedian and playwright, but was an excellent theatrical manager, a keen judge of a play, and a first-rate man of business. On his arrival at Passy, Sardou found that Montigny was at rehearsal, but sent in his card to Mme. Montigny (Rose Chéri). This lady received him graciously, and promised that Montigny should read the manuscript. The very next day Sardou was invited to go to the theatre, and welcomed with good news by Montigny. His play had been accepted, and it was settled that Madame Montigny was to play the part of Suzanne, written for another.

"Les Pattes de Mouche" was first performed on the 1st of May, 1860. It was splendidly interpreted and met a great success. After the fall of the curtain Montigny and Lemoine met Scribe, and Lemoine remarked:

"Well! This is the author of 'Paris à l'Envers.' Do you believe in his future now?"

Scribe simply replied: "I was mistaken." Scribe died on February 20, 1861, and did not live to see the greatest triumph of his successor.

A new act comedy entitled "The Adventures of a Billet-Doux" adapted from "Les Pattes de Mouche," by Charles Frodoz, was produced at Drury Lane, London, on November 19, 1860.

Another version of the same play, "A Scrap of Paper," by J. Palgrave Simpson, was produced at the St. James's Theatre, London, on April 22, 1861.

About a fortnight after the production of "Les Pattes de Mouche" at the Gymnase, "Monsieur Garat" was put on at the Théâtre-Majet on May 31, 1860. It was one of the longest and most brilliant successes that the fortune of that small house. It ran for a long time and did much to build up the theatrical reputation.

During these days the two plays were in simultaneous re-

hearsal, and Sardou was in a great state of anxiety—curiously enough, not at all for the fate of “Monsieur Garat,” but about the piece that was to face the footlights at the Gymnase. This was not the first time Sardou had been under fire. In 1854 he was present in the coulisses at the Odéon during the disastrous failure of “La Taverne des Etudiants.” In his second piece, “Les Premières Armes de Figaro,” in 1859, Déjazet remarked that she had no confidence in her old prompter, and distrusted her own memory, so Sardou squatted in the man’s place and did the prompting himself. He had no leisure for anxiety and was not in a position to realise the details of that evening’s success. His third piece, “Les Gens Nerveux,” did not escape without “jolts and jars,” but “I felt myself sheltered by the celebrity of my collaborator Théodore Barrière,” said Sardou, “who took on his own broad shoulders the main responsibility of failure or success.”

May 15th, which was to decide the fate of “Les Pattes de Mouche,” was one of the most anxious evenings ever experienced by Sardou. He himself described his state of nervous tension, fright, and discouragement. The same emotions were experienced on subsequent occasions, but never with equal intensity.

“I never step on the broad pavement by the Gymnase,” he said, “without glancing at a certain bench, where, after innumerable turns on the Boulevard, I went to sit at the end of each act to await the news brought me from time to time by my friends. In spite of the success of the second act I had so little idea of the effect produced that, towards the end of the performance, seeing somebody rushing out in a hurry, I thought: ‘The piece must have been a dead failure, the people are leaving before the end.’ The spectator passed near me, recognised me—it was Berton Père—and shouted: ‘Great success, sir, my congratulations.’ Reassured, I rushed into the coulisses, where I

arrived just in the nick of time to be present at the triumph of my interpreters."

The difficult problem that confronts all young playwrights was now solved. Sardou had fought down the odium of failure. The struggle had lasted six years, but he was now in a position to work out his dramatic ideas untrammelled by constant anxiety as to the placing of his work.

CHAPTER V

SUCCESS BRINGS CHARGES OF PLAGIARISM

AT this period Sardou seems to have shared Molière's opinion that the function of the stage is amusement; he felt that plays should be written not to harrow up the soul of the spectator, but to hearten him up after the cares of the day. The result of his dramatic activity for the next six years was a series of diverting comedies, among them "Nos Intimes," produced at the Vaudeville on November 16, 1861; "Les Ganaches," at the Gymnase on October 29, 1862; "Les Pommes du Voisin," at the Palais-Royal on October 25, 1864, and "Nos Bons Villageois" on October 3, 1866, at the Gymnase. He also brought out a group of three comedies satirising certain features of life under the Second Empire. In the four comedies named above are found humour with no aftertaste of bitterness; healthy laughter at the foibles of others; at the vulgar envy of the dear friends of M. Caussade in "Nos Intimes"; at the blind and stubborn conservatism of the Marquis de la Rochepéans and his friends in "Les Ganaches," which has been aptly compared with the invincible objection of the city of Beauvais to the advent of the railway; and the free thought and ultra-democratic ideas represented by Dr. Léonidas Vauclin. It is against these two opponents of Bonapartism, the Legitimists and the Democrats, that the satire is directed. "Les Pommes du Voisin" is a comedy the subject of which is the escapades of a hitherto staid young man who resolves to have his fling before marriage. "Nos Bon Villageois" is a skit on the country folk who are not so unsophisticated as they appear, in which some critics found signs of opposition to the imperial régime, because it laughs at the ways of the peasantry, who

ever he found it," in actual life or in books. After all, even his most bitter enemies have never accused Sardou of thefts equalling in daring those of Alexandre Dumas Senior. We are told of this great man that "he borrowed audaciously from such well-read authors as Schiller, Sir Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, Augustin Thierry, and Barante. He pleaded that a man of his rank was entitled to avail himself of what was good wherever he found it. Even this plea of defence was borrowed from Molière."

In his amusing pamphlet "My Plagiarisms," published in 1882, in reply to certain charges made on the appearance of "Odette" in November of the preceding year, Sardou tells how he triumphantly rebutted various accusations of literary larceny:

"One day I called on the publisher Michel Lévy, and asked for the address of Mme. Charles de Bernard. I explained that I had promised a play for the Palais-Royal, and had come across a promising subject in Bernard's novel 'Une Aventure de Magistrat,' and that I desired to come to terms with the widow, to whom I supposed the copyright to belong. Lévy expressed his pleasure at this example of literary probity, and mentioned several instances of famous novels that had been dramatised without one centime of indemnity being paid. During our conversation Lévy continued to search among his papers, and at last said: 'The address you want is of no use, for I am Madame Charles de Bernard.' Then, producing an agreement under which he had acquired all the rights of the novel, he ended by asking me for one-third of his royalties for permission to dramatise the tale.

"If ever man thought himself safe from further claims it was myself. But you will see. 'Les Pommes du Voisin' was performed. Two days afterwards the Authors' Society wrote to protest against the use I had made of Charles de Bernard's work, and the same day 'M. de Bragelonne' [Dumas] published in his Journal, *Le Voleur*, a virulent article in which I was denounced as a thief whose throat ought to be cut by the Committee of the Authors' Society.

"My reply was only too easy to make. I wrote immediately to the *Figaro* to establish the facts, and to prove, agreement in

hand, that I had loyally acquired the rights I was accused of having stolen. After that I awaited the compliments of the Committee.

"None came. They had said their say, and shammed dead."

An adaptation of "Les Pommes du Voisin" entitled "Themis," by H. P. Stephens, was produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, March 29, 1880.

A version of "Les Pommes du Voisin" entitled "Queen's Counsel," by James Mortimer, was produced at the Comedy Theatre, London, May 24, 1890.

All this time Sardou was busily experimenting with various other subjects and types of comedy. "Les Femmes Fortes," just performed at the Vaudeville on December 31, 1860, was the first play in which he dealt with the "new woman." This study of emancipated and "Americanised" womanhood (as Sardou believed) was originally written for the Gymnase, and the leading rôle was intended by the author for Rose-Chéri. Montigny, however, vetoed this proposal, and Sardou took his play to the Vaudeville, where it was at once accepted. It speaks much for the two men that this incident was not allowed to interrupt the friendship existing between Sardou and Montigny.

Another play of no great importance, "L'Ecureuil," was produced by Sardou at the Vaudeville on February 9, 1861, under the pseudonym of "Carle."

The three act comedy in prose, "Piccolino," first played at the Gymnase on July 18, 1861, was written to compensate Montigny for the loss of "Les Femmes Fortes." It proved a brilliant success, and drew full houses all through the dog-days. Some years afterward, in 1876, this comedy was rewritten and converted into a comic opera, for which M. Ernest Guiraud composed the music. In this form "Piccolino" was successfully produced at the Théâtre des Variétés on April 11, 1876, and enjoyed a good run. It

was even put on the same stage again on September 30th, after the summer holidays, with a new dénouement and a few fresh touches from the authors.

An English version of "Piccolino," by Sydney Samuel, was produced at Her Majesty's Theatre, London, January 29, 1879, by the Carl Rosa Opera Company. Another version, by Barton Hill, was produced in New York, September 28, 1886.

"La Papillonne," first played at the Théâtre-Français on April 11, 1862, has only three characters of importance, the foremost of whom is an unfaithful husband, whose escapades may be said to form the staple of the play. Restricted pieces of this kind do not afford sufficient scope for Sardou's talents. He needs the stimulus of a wider stage, a greater crowd of characters, more life, and a more intricate plot to develop his resources. "La Papillonne" met with a somewhat cold reception. The habitués of the house of Molière found the broadness of the piece distasteful, and the characters exaggerated and improbable. It is so unusual for Sardou to misjudge his public that it may not be out of place to explain that "La Papillonne" was really written for the Vaudeville, but that the management of the Comédie-Française, prompted by Count Walewski, was so anxious to secure the piece that the author agreed to the transfer. But the cast at its new quarters was too staid and the audience was too fastidious. It fell flat, though later on, with more suitable exponents, it was completely successful at the Gymnase.

An adaptation of "La Papillonne" entitled "A Gay Deceiver," by James Mortimer, was produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, February 3, 1879; the scene is laid at Scarborough.

A "readaptation" of "La Papillonne," entitled "Butterfly Fever," by James Mortimer, was produced at the Criterion Theatre, London, May 17, 1881.

Another comparatively unimportant play of this period is the three-act comedy "La Perle Noire," which was performed at the Gymnase on April 12, 1862. It was founded on a story of the same name, written by Sardou in his salad days. This tale is a mere trifling sketch of some fifty pages, which the author himself calls a "juvenile effort." "La Perle Noire" has been several times revived—for example, it was played for three nights at the Gymnase as recently as November 30, 1899.

The two-act comedy of "Les Prés Saint-Gervais," produced at the Théâtre-Déjazet on April 24, 1862, contained a part expressly written for Virginie Déjazet. Her impersonation of the Prince de Conti, who is represented as being shown life round the guinguettes of Paris by his tutor Harpin, was a masterly piece of work. At the fall of the curtain, the whole house called for the brilliant actress. "She appeared, holding Sardou by the hand, and tenderly kissed him, amid thunders of applause." This little comedy was subsequently, in collaboration with Philippe Gille, converted into an opera-bouffe with music by Charles Lecocq, in which form it was played at the Paris Théâtre des Variétés in 1874.

An adaptation of "Les Prés St. Gervais," by Robert Reese, was produced at the Criterion, London, November 28, 1874.

On April 13, 1863, "Bataille d'Amour," written in collaboration with Karl Daclin, was performed at the Opéra-Comique. It is an unimportant piece in three acts, in fact a mere libretto, for which Vaucorbeil composed the music. At this period of his life Sardou was apparently experimenting in various types to test his powers.

His next play, "Les Diables Noirs," is a somewhat sombre drama in four acts. The "black devils" are the vices of gambling and profligacy. The piece was prohibited by Napoleon's Minister, Count Walewski, only

three nights before the date of the first performance. No reason was assigned for this action of the government, and the play was suspended for several months. Then came a sudden change of ministry. Marshal Vaillant replaced Walewski, the interdict was removed, and "Les Diables Noirs" was performed at the Vaudeville on November 28, 1863. It was severely handled by the critics and met with no success. The prohibition had whetted the curiosity of the public, and there was a general expectation that the piece would prove to be an attack on the clergy or to possess some other spice of scandal. When it was found that the plot was founded on an ordinary love story, the public interest suddenly subsided and the reaction was fatal to the play. The Empress Eugénie, however, witnessed a performance incognito, attended by a single lady in waiting. The piece so touched her majesty, we are told, that it moved her to tears. Shortly afterward Sardou was decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honour, and in August of the following year was promoted to be an officer of the Order. It is not easy to say whether this distinction is to be regarded as a personal token of the Empress's approval. The decoration has been, with more plausibility, attributed to the support accorded to the Bonapartist government in October of the previous year by "Les Ganaches."

"Le Dégel," produced at the Théâtre-Déjazet on April 12, 1864, was the last piece by Sardou in which his old friend and helper Virginie Déjazet played. The veteran actress, now in her sixty-seventh year, played the part of Hector de Bassompierre, but though she managed to avert a failure she was not able to convert the piece into a success. The plot is too thin; the piece is open to the charges of being meagre and monotonous. It disappointed even the ardent friends of the author. It struggled along for a

time with small and dwindling receipts, and then vanished from the bills, not to reappear.

On May 31, 1870, the Théâtre-Déjazet closed its doors: "The success of the artist did not mean financial success." A special farewell performance of "*Les Prés Saint-Gervais*" was given by Déjazet on June 3, 1870. The departure of their old favourite under these sad circumstances brought tears to the eyes of many among the audience. The theatre had been sold at a loss of 40,000 francs, and Déjazet was heavily encumbered with debt, only fifty per cent. being available for creditors. Not long after the war, the *Gaulois* organised a benefit performance; the arrangements were placed in the hands of a committee on which Sardou sat as the representative of the dramatic authors. The performance took place at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra on September 27, 1874. The first item on the programme was Act I of "*Monsieur Garat*," in which Déjazet herself appeared. This performance and a tombola held on October 4th realised nearly 80,000 francs, which sum was carefully invested by the committee to save it from the clutches of her creditors.

Towards the close of her life [1798-1875], soured by poverty and disappointment, Déjazet in a letter to her son in 1873 wrote rather bitterly of the supposed indifference of Sardou to her plight, though the benefit performance to which reference has been made, and of which Sardou was an active promoter, shows no reluctance to lend a helping hand. She mentioned how she had befriended "the timid and anxious little man whom I then saw for the first time," how she had striven to induce managers to take up "*Candide*," and how she had brought about the collaboration with Vanderburch. "Finally it was I who, happy and triumphant, brought the bear into Sardou's den, a servants' attic which Laurentine's [later, Sardou's wife] mother had given him, for he knew not where to lay his head then.

I can see that attic still. A kind of camp bed, two chairs, and a table covered with papers on which the great man, so little then, had planted his two elbows with his head in his hands. He did not even hear me enter. I threw the manuscript to him saying: 'Wake up; here is some work to do.'

On June 25, 1864, the three-act comedy of "Don Quichotte" was performed at the Gymnase, and did not cease running till the middle of October, about the time of the first performance of "Les Pommès du Voisin."

Another minor piece by Sardou was "Le Capitaine Henriot," a comic opera dealing with the reign of Henry of Navarre in the year 1594, for which Sardou and Gustave Vaëz wrote the libretto and F. Auguste Gevaërt composed the music. It was produced at the Opéra-Comique on December 29, 1864.

Three important plays produced at this period of Sardou's life, to which reference has been already made, form a group by themselves. They are "Les Vieux Garçons," performed at the Gymnase on January 21, 1865; "La Famille Benoiton," which made its appearance at the Vaudeville on November 4, 1865; and "Maison Neuve," brought out at the Vaudeville on December 4, 1866. All three plays are pungent satires on some phase of society as it existed at Paris toward the end of the Second Empire. It was a time of inflated luxury and extravagance. At the hands of Baron Haussmann Paris was then undergoing that process of rebuilding and adornment which culminated in 1867, the year of the Great Exhibition. Whole quarters of tortuous streets were demolished, and splendid new boulevards lined with palaces took their place. One result of this transformation was the sudden building up of immense fortunes by a few lucky contractors. A mania for money-making and speculation set in, and there is no doubt that the tendency of the prevalent display and extravagance was inimical to a healthy home life. M. Didier in "La

Famille Benoiton "slaving away to keep pace with his wife's extravagance; the slang and vulgarities of the parvenu Benoîtons; the lax ethical code of the three old reprobates in *"Les Vieux Garçons"*—these are true pictures of the time. The last-named five-act comedy takes its name from the three old bachelors, de Veaucourtois, Clavières, and de Mortemer, all men of different character, thereby affording the dramatist an excellent opportunity of displaying his skill in characterisation, but alike in the fact that apparently one of their chief occupations in life is to win the love of married ladies. It proved a brilliant success at the Gymnase.

An adaptation of *"Les Vieux Garçons"* entitled *"Reclaimed,"* by James Mortimer, was produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, September 14, 1881.

Other types of the time are Claire and René in *"Maison Neuve,"* who are not content to enjoy a prosperous business and a competence. The life is too humdrum—they must launch out and cut a dash. The result seems inevitable disaster. But one peculiarity of Sardou's plays is that his dénouements are almost invariably happy. A *deus ex machina* is found, and the ruin which impended over foolish Claire and René is ultimately averted.

All three satires achieved great success: *"Les Vieux Garçons"* was directed against the false morality of the times, perhaps not to the same extent as *"La Famille Benoiton,"* because the ways of upstarts lend themselves better to comic treatment. In fact *"La Famille Benoiton"* was one of the most brilliant successes in the history of the Paris stage. It reminded many of Beaumarchais's *"Le Mariage de Figaro,"* and earned for the author the title of *"Petit-Neveu of Beaumarchais."* By way of more material reward, it brought him royalties to the amount of 25,000 francs, thereby contributing towards the purchase-money of his country place at Marly. It has been re-

vived more than once, as for instance in 1890 at the Odéon, a quarter-century after its original production.

An English version of "Maison Neuve" was made for Mr. and Mrs. Kendal and produced by them in London in 1885; this version, entitled "Mayfair," was the work of A. W. (now Sir Arthur) Pinero.

A version of "Maison Neuve" entitled "Vanity," by Justin Huntly McCarthy, M. P., was produced at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, August 11, 1886.

All through the winter of 1865 the name "Benoiton" was on everybody's lips, and the popularity of the play is attested by the fact that all kinds of articles in the shops were christened "Benoiton."

A curious little story is told apropos of the rehearsal of this play, which shows how keenly Sardou observed every indication, however trifling, bearing on the prospects of his piece. Anxious to find an actress to fit some minor part, Sardou called on a certain professor of elocution. The latter said to him: "I must ask you to hear little Camille, this amusing little creature of eight." The dramatist was so struck with the drollery and self-possession of the little maid that he inserted the rôle of Fanfan in the play, a rôle which previously had no existence in the scheme. The actors looked askance at the new part, and deputed Anna Fargueil to deliver a protest. The addition would, it was thought, compromise the success of the play. Sardou simply replied: "We shall soon see," and kept his eyes and ears open.

The rehearsal was proceeding, when suddenly roars of laughter were heard coming from the fireman stationed on the stage, who had been tickled by the acting of little Miss Camille.

"That is all I want," said Sardou to the assembled company. "The fireman is right. He is the audience."

And Fanfan, in truth, contributed not a little to the success of the piece.

In these satires Sardou handles the whip lightly. There is no savage invective, but gentle ridicule: customs are scourged laughingly. Rouxeau, a well-known critic of the day, said of "Les Vieux Garçons": "Never has social sore been laid bare with a defter touch." Sardou himself told us what type of bachelor he most desired to hold up to execration in this play. "It is those wilful men who have never asked themselves whether life did not bring them any other obligation than to lead the most agreeable existence possible, who are the slaves of their own indolence, and out of sheer selfishness will not be either husbands or fathers, but live on society like parasites."

Not that Sardou was a writer of thesis-plays, like Alexandre Dumas the Younger, or Emile Augier. It is true that every one of his pieces is found upon examination to contain a moral. But Sardou never consciously subordinated the development of his plot to the maintenance of any theory. In fact, his purpose in writing plays was to please, and not to preach, and the logical nexus between the different scenes is only used by him to maintain the necessary dramatic illusion, and not to develop the stages of an argument.

Sardou was always an adept in selecting the current idea which promised the best dramatic material and had the best chance of pleasing the public taste when worked up into a play. Given the idea, the existence of a moral is merely evidence of the general excellence of the workmanship, not of conscious design.

CHAPTER VI

SARDOU BECOMES A LANDED GENTLEMAN AND IS CALLED TO COURT

SARDOU had now reached a point in his career where Napoleon and Eugénie became aware of his existence. On four separate occasions his plays were performed before the Court at Compiègne. Every autumn Napoleon III. and the Empress used to repair to the pleasant palace on the Oise. This country seat was originally constructed by St. Louis, and then rebuilt and enlarged by Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Napoleon I. It contained a handsome *Salle du Spectacle*, capable of seating eight hundred spectators. It was the custom, when the Court was in residence, to "command" companies from Paris to give performances in this theatre. The four plays of Sardou performed at Compiègne were: "Les Prés Saint-Gervais," "Les Ganaches," "Nos Intimes," and "La Famille Benoiton." Of these pieces the only one that seemed to satisfy the select audience was "Les Prés Saint-Gervais," thanks to the sprightly acting of Déjazet, then in her sixty-fourth year. The other three plays failed to please. "Les Ganaches" and "Nos Intimes" were but coldly received. Some of the scenes from the third act of the latter were too pungent for the members of the Court—a curious affectation of delicacy of feeling to be paraded in such notorious times. During the performance of "La Famille Benoiton" the temperature of the audience is described as "glacial." The very weaknesses at which the satire was aimed were to a great extent directly traceable to the vast improvements of Paris carried on by Baron Haussmann at the Emperor's direction. The guests at Compiègne were scarcely likely to be in sympathy with

the satirist, and did not at any time afford a very congenial audience for a company of players. The Emperor's guests were too intent on schemes to advance their own interests at court, or too fatigued with hunting parties and the other strenuous amusements of court life, to appreciate a good play. Sometimes, we read, dinner was late, or unduly prolonged, in which case it was customary to curtail or otherwise mutilate the piece. Under such circumstances no players can feel at their best. In the case of "La Famille Benoiton" we are told that something in the play had given umbrage to important personages at court. It is, therefore, not easy to see why Count Bacciochi, the Emperor's chamberlain, was permitted to select this particular play. Though the author fully expected a cold audience, he obeyed the summons, but when, according to custom, he was invited by Marshal Vaillant, the Minister of the Household, to present himself in the Emperor's box, Sardou excused himself, saying that his actors were depressed by the manner of their reception, and that he must remain with them to comfort them. "You, Marshal, are not the man to feel surprise at an officer wishing to remain with his men."

Sardou had now arrived at a stage in his career, when, so far from being the "petit garçon" whom his friend Montigny had known, he had already worked his way to the forefront of contemporary dramatists. Thanks to the excellence of his business habits, the successful playwright was also a prosperous man, and had already been for two or three years in possession of his beautiful villa at Marly-le-Roi, not far from Versailles.

Though the majority of Sardou's plays have been pictures of contemporary life and manners in various aspects, he was always a diligent student of the past, and it was in a spot rich in historical associations that he chose to reside. The story goes that when Louis XIV. was jour-

neying one day from Versailles, he passed through Marly. The King was struck with the peaceful beauty of the spot, summoned his architect, and bade him erect a modest villa there. But Madame de Maintenon did not approve, and by her influence a magnificent château was erected.

It was there that she induced the King to revoke the Edict of Nantes in 1685, and there that Marie Antoinette first saw the Diamond Necklace. The revolutionary mob in 1793 practically destroyed the château, only a ruin being left. To a student of history and a man of Sardou's temperament Marly presented irresistible attractions.

"Le Verduron," as he called his residence, was once the site of a feudal castle occupied by a younger branch of the Montmorency family. Louis XIV. bought the property, pulled down the fortress, filled up the moats, and built a handsome house there for the governor of Marly. After the Revolution the house remained untenanted for several years, and there is a story that when out hunting one day General Bonaparte passed on horseback through the dining-room.

This house, somewhat remodeled, at last became the home of Sardou. He occupied it immediately after his early successes as a playwright. He first saw it when he was spending the summer season at Louveciennes, near Marly. One afternoon in the summer of 1863, while jogging along on a donkey, wrapped in deep thought over the plot of a new play, his beast suddenly stopped at the gateway of the dilapidated country-house. Aroused from his reverie, Sardou looked up, and was so charmed by the venerable ruin that he yearned to possess it. He asked a passing peasant to whom it belonged. "To Madame de Béthune-Sully." "Is she visible?" "No." "Why not?" "Because she died yesterday."

Soon after this the property was advertised for sale, the price fixed at 110,000 francs. Sardou offered 105,000

francs, one-half cash, the remainder in a year. Note the terms. At that time his entire fortune did not exceed 50,000 francs. But the play he was constructing when the donkey interrupted his thoughts brought him the other 50,000, and when the year was over Sardou owned his villa in fee simple.

As is usually the case with country-houses, the purchase-price of Marly was the least item in the total cost. Sardou spent more than one fortune in improving and beautifying his property. It came to be one of a number of beautiful villas. It was in Marly too that Alexandre Dumas the Elder built his famous "Villa Monte Cristo," and later on Alexandre Dumas the Son also occupied a handsome country-house near that of Sardou. This, by the way, Dumas did not purchase: it was bequeathed to him by an admirer.

The Sardou villa at Marly is approached by a fine avenue lined by Sphinxes in rose granite. These are the same gorgeous sphinxes which excited so much admiration at the Paris exhibition of 1867. There is a magnificent wrought-iron gateway at the entrance of the avenue. The country-houses of France are famous for their beautiful gateways, many of which consist of lace-like iron-work wrought sometimes by the craftsmen of the middle ages, often of good modern imitations. The house itself is a large mansion in the Louis XIV. style, the central block of which is but one story in height, while the wings or pavilions contain two. It is situated in the centre of grounds combining the charms of gardens, groves, and artificial woods, partly arranged in the style of French landscape gardening, and partly in imitation of the more unconventional parks of English country houses.

Sardou filled the interior of his villa with beautiful and unique objects. Even the antechambers and vestibules were crowded with curiosities. Among them visitors noticed a

sleigh of the time of Louis XV., ancient sedan-chairs, arquebuses, matchlocks and all kinds of mediæval weapons, the clock which stood in Louis XVI.'s room, an ivory statue of Voltaire which came from his home in Ferney, and many bibelots.

The main drawing-room he furnished in eighteenth century style, and hung it with rare tapestries from Beauvais; paintings, prints, and drawings of great value he suspended on its walls. These were not only of artistic but also of antiquarian value, for Sardou purchased all manner of "documents" to aid him in his study of the epoch when he was writing those plays based on the times of the French Revolution. He thus accumulated a vast store of wood, steel, and copper engravings, of lithographs, and of coloured xylographic prints illustrative of this period. Many of these he hung upon the walls of the living rooms, but most of them were to be seen in the library. There, too, were to be found many priceless autographs. One of these was the famous report of Camille Desmoulins on Danton, with comments in Robespierre's handwriting.

The library at Marly consisted of twelve rooms, in which was accommodation for 20,000 volumes. This number did not by any means represent all of Sardou's books, for he had another though a smaller collection at Paris, while at Nice he had still more books concerning the eighteenth century, with a vast store of accompanying pictures, prints, and manuscripts. He had, by the way, two estates at Nice—Guardamidio, a picturesque farmhouse, and a more pretentious country-villa on a rock overlooking the Mediterranean which he dubbed "Villa Théodora." Nice is but a few miles distant from Le Cannet, a small village near Cannes, from which, as we have seen, the family of Sardou originally came.

CHAPTER VII

THE SUCCESS OF PATRIE AND THE END OF THE EMPIRE

THE important group of three plays, "Les Vieux Garçons," "La Famille Benoiton," and "Maison Neuve," satirising various features of life under the Second Empire toward its close, was followed by another type of piece, in which various ethical questions were touched upon rather than discussed, for Sardou consistently eschewed the thesis-play; his conception of the true function of the stage was not the solution of psychological problems, but the presentation of life and action and the delineation of character.

The landmarks of the transitional period are "Séraphine," "Patrie," "Fernande," "Rabagas," "L'Oncle Sam," "La Haine," "Daniel Rochat," and "Divorçons." In these plays the author was no longer content to play round the surface of things and set forth the ridiculous side of externals; he probed somewhat more deeply, and attempted to exhibit the underlying moral.

"Séraphine," the first of this group, was produced at the Gymnase on December 21, 1868. The heroine, Séraphine, Baroness de Rosanges, had been guilty of follies in her youth, and now with years came remorse and ill-regulated devotion. In her spiritual pride this female Tartuffe proceeds to wreck the happiness of her daughters. No play of Sardou involved him in greater difficulties with the censors than "Séraphine." In 1868, the government grew aware that, in spite of the external glitter of apparent prosperity, the influence of Napoléon III. was waning, and that the Empire seemed but a whited sepulchre.

His ministers were inclined to be unduly sensitive to

attacks, especially if directed against the Empress. Three of Sardou's plays had satirized certain features of the times, and already his name was not in good odour with the authorities. Hence the ministers were predisposed to find in the new play offensive allusions to the Empress. In deference to their wishes, the title was altered from "La D  vote" to "S  raphine," the name of the chief character in the play, and one scene was suppressed. They made other objections, but the piece was finally passed; though the earlier performances were interrupted by disturbances, it finally proved a success.

"Patrie," one of Sardou's finest plays and the first of his dramas, was performed for the first time at the Porte Saint-Martin on March 18, 1869. It is not a thesis-play, though it depicts a moral conflict. "I do not know," wrote Sardou, "how the dramatic idea is revealed to my confr  res. My procedure is invariably the same. It always appears to me in the form of a kind of philosophical equation, the problem being to discover the unknown quantity. Directly the problem is set, it pervades all my thoughts, lays siege to me, and leaves me no rest till I have found the formula required. In 'Patrie,' for example, the problem took this form: 'What is the greatest sacrifice a man can make for love of country?'"

The dramatist had promised a play to Rapha  l F  lix, the manager of the Porte Saint-Martin, who had a piece by George Sand running at the time. This play proved a failure, and Sardou received an urgent appeal to complete his promised piece. Working in his retreat at Marly, he finished the drama in the short space of five weeks.

Sardou appropriately dedicated "Patrie" to John Lothrop Motley, the historian of the "Rise of the Dutch Republic." When once it had reached the stage of rehearsal the author's only difficulty was with Anna Fargueil, whose exceptional talents were accompanied by a most

intractable disposition. Finding it uncongenial, she refused point-blank the rôle of Dolorès, and was encouraged in her refusal by Raphaël Félix, who was ambitious of seeing the part played by his sister Lia. But Sardou was equal to the occasion; he induced Mme. Fargueil to reconsider her decision, and in the end she contributed not a little to the success of the piece.

The psychological interest in "Patrie" centres in the conflict of love and duty in the same breast, while Sardou's subsequent dramas are, as a rule, constructed on a groundwork of violent passions and emotions which only come into conflict through the interaction of contrasted characters in the play. "Patrie" marked the revival of the historical drama from the decadence into which it had fallen at the end of the Second Empire. P. B. Gheusi, one of Sardou's collaborators, gives us some idea of the great position suddenly taken by the dramatist and the ovations with which he was everywhere greeted. Five days after the first performance of "Patrie," during the last entr'acte of "La Diva" at another theatre, Sardou was recognized by the spectators. Cries of "Vive Sardou" rose from all parts of the house. "He blushed like a young girl, but did not stir from his place." Raphaël Félix returned the salutations on his behalf. When the curtain fell, many of the audience formed a group in the vestibule and waited for Sardou. There they greeted him with fresh acclamations, and attempted to carry him home in triumph, when he fled in a cab.

Seventeen years later "Patrie" was recast by Sardou, with the help of Louis Gallet, and performed as a lyrical drama in four acts at the Paris Opera House on December 17, 1886, M. Paladilhe furnishing the music. The opera of "Patrie" was a distinct success, and was revived for four nights on January 7, 1891, when it reached its 60th

performance, and again on April 9, 1900, when it ran for thirteen nights at the Opera House.

The operatic version of "Patrie" was performed in German under the title of "Vaterland" at Hamburg in 1889 and at La Scala at Milan in 1895, as "Patria."

Apropos of this event, Sardou narrated how, on July 13, 1870, he was present at the first performance of the drama at the Théâtre de la Monnaie at Brussels. Fresh from his long experience of Paris theatres, he was struck by the phlegmatic temperament of the Brussels burghers. Two notable Frenchmen happened to be present at this performance, the Duc d'Aumale and Henri Rochefort, the former in the Burgomaster's box, the latter in the circle. The two exiles led the most vigorous applause that evening. During one of the intervals Sardou was invited into the Burgomaster's box to be introduced to the Duc d'Aumale and to receive his congratulations. The author expressed to the Burgomaster the wish that his compatriots would not treat his work so coldly. "Coldly, young man," said M. Anspach in his most paternal tone, "why this is the *ne plus ultra* of Flemish warmth, and yet you complain." Then the Duc d'Aumale, turning to Sardou, said with a melancholy smile: "These folk are not our Parisians, monsieur: *they* rise to the occasion better than the good people of Brussels."

Next morning Sardou and a friend took breakfast with Rochefort at the Café Riche. The man of the *Lanterne* did not weary of praising "Patrie." "His concluding words kept ringing in my ear: 'What a superb drama! What a marvellous opera it would make!'" It is to this suggestion that the operatic version of "Patrie" was due. The conversion took two months, and various alterations were found necessary. In the second act the scene in the Salle des Fêtes in the Duke's Palace was inserted merely for the sake of the ballet, which was judged to be indis-

pensable in an opera. In this form "Patrie" was very successful, and a performance which was given for a charitable purpose realized no less than 94,000 francs.

A revival of the drama was in course of preparation at the Comédie-Française at the very time when the building erected in 1803 was burned to the ground in the disastrous fire of March 8, 1900. The performance was thus postponed for more than a year, when the new building, erected on the same site, was opened with great ceremony on December 29, 1900, in the presence of the President of the Republic and the Ministers.

The scene being laid in Brussels, it may well be imagined that the drama of "Patrie" evoked the deepest interest in Belgium. The gossips of the day went so far as to suggest that the piece was written at the inspiration of Napoleon III., who thus sought to curry favour with the Belgians with a view to paving the way to the absorption of the little kingdom into his own empire. The union of Rysoor and La Trémouille was adduced in support of this theory! But it was too ridiculous to gain serious credence. In discussing the matter the *Indépendance Belge* said: "It is the cause of Flanders that the author has pleaded, and God knows if it would be possible to win it more triumphantly. Sardou ought to be proclaimed a Belgian citizen by the Chamber of Representatives."

At the time when the original drama of "Patrie" was in rehearsal, early in 1869, "La Famille des Gueux," by Jules Claretie and Petrucelli della Gatina, the scene of which is also laid in Flanders, was being played at Paris. Though this identity of scene was the only point of resemblance in the two pieces, a dispute arose between Sardou and Claretie with regard to priority of treatment, and the affair nearly came to a duel. One of Sardou's seconds was his friend de Najac, who afterward collaborated in "Divorçons." At the last moment the dispute was

amicably settled. The quarrel did not last long, for the two men met in the following year while the Franco-Prussian war was at its height. Claretie frankly came forward, grasped Sardou by both hands, and with the remark that such a crisis was no fitting time for quarrels, expressed his desire for a reconciliation. From that time they were the best of friends, and in 1901 Jules Claretie, as administrator of the Comédie-Française, had the pleasure of reviving "Patrie."

When "Patrie" was performed at Brussels some Flemish savants questioned the historical propriety of introducing the Porte de Louvain in the days of the Duke of Alva: "It was not then in existence, it has only been built twenty years." But Sardou produced an old print showing the Porte as it existed at the date in question.

An adaptation of "Patrie," entitled "Dolores," by Mrs. S. Lane, was produced at the Britannia Theatre, Hoxton, April 6, 1874. Another adaptation, entitled "Fatherland," by Henry Labouchère, was produced at the Queen's Theatre, London, January 3, 1878. "A Sorceress of Love," an adaptation of "Patrie," by Louis N. Parker, was produced at the Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, on October 1, 1894. There is also a version entitled "Betrayed," by H. G. Wills.

In "Fernande," produced at the Gymnase on March 8, 1870, the author reverted to the ethical play. It followed "Froufrou" at the Gymnase, where it was still enjoying a successful run when the Franco-German war broke out on July 19, 1870. The times were not propitious for theatrical enterprise, and the performances were suspended. They were resumed, however, during the Commune of 1871, at the request of the Communist leader Raoul Rigault, and the play-bills were still standing on the walls when the conflagrations which destroyed about a fourth of the city broke out on May 22-27 of that fateful

year. Rigault was shot by a firing squad on May 24th. The subject of this play is borrowed from Diderot's lively tale "*Jacques le Fataliste*." The scene is laid in a gambling hell kept by the widowed Madame Sénéchal. Though her daughter Fernande is brought up amid such depraved surroundings, the young girl herself remains at heart uncontaminated, and it is in order to save her permanently from her environment that M. Pomerol, the advocate, returns to the spot where he had sown his wild oats. As the moralist Raoul Rigault pleaded, there is nothing offensive in the play except the environment. The two plays of "*Séraphine*" and "*Fernande*" afford excellent examples of Sardou's capacity for analysing the female character.

An adaptation of "*Fernande*" by Sutherland Edwards was played at the Royal Court Theatre, London, September 20, 1879.

We now come to one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of France. On receipt of the news of the disasters of Wörth and Forbach, on August 7, 1870, the Empress Eugénie moved from St. Cloud to the Tuileries, where she lived in increasing terror of the mob, holding her last reception on August 14th. On the afternoon of September 3d came the fatal telegram from Napoléon III.: "The army is defeated and captured, I myself am a prisoner." The next day saw that bloodless revolution by which the Second Empire fell and the Third Republic was established. As the clock of the Tuileries rang out half-past three the imperial flag was lowered. This was a signal—the Tuileries were stormed. The soldiers on guard interposed little resistance. Before the mob broke in, Signor Nigra, the Italian ambassador, warned the Empress that she must fly. Escorted by Prince Metternich and Dr. Evans, the American dentist, she left Paris in disguise the same night for Belgium, and later sailed from Deauville for England on Sir John Burgoyne's yacht.

Among the crowd assembled outside the gates of the Tuileries on that fateful day were Sardou and a friend of his, a certain Armand Gouzien. The Empress was still in the palace and the imperial flag still flying. The building was protected by a detachment of the Imperial Guard. Sardou and his friend stood watching a man engaged in knocking the golden eagles off the gates. The crowd became dangerously excited, the gates were stormed, and several hundred persons, including Sardou and his friend, were swept into the gardens. Foreseeing a collision with the troops, the two friends came to the front. Gouzien harangued the mob, saying that the Tuileries belonged to the people, and that the Empire no longer existed. The Imperial Guard, he said, must not remain, and he proposed that he and citizen Sardou go and demand the withdrawal of these troops. But he urged them to keep quiet, in order to avoid a bloody conflict. The crowd broke out into applause and patiently waited while Sardou, tying a handkerchief to the end of a walking-stick, hastened with his companion toward the soldiers and asked for the commander. Two men came forward; they were General Mellinet and M. de Lesseps. In the meantime the Empress Eugénie had left the palace, and the two ambassadors persuaded the general to lower the imperial flag and to replace the Imperial Guard by the National Guard and the Gardes Mobiles. Mellinet then mounted a chair and tried to address the crowd, but they were too excited to give him a hearing. With the arrival of the Mobiles the danger was averted, and when the crowd at length forced its way through the archway it found all safely guarded and surged harmlessly through the palace into the Place du Carrousel. This tactful handling of a somewhat critical moment averted a conflict, and in all probability saved the Tuileries for the time. It was, however, destroyed on May 22 and 23 of the following year.

CHAPTER VIII

SARDOU'S PLAYS ATTACKED BY POLITICIANS AND THE CENSORSHIP INVOKED

THE comic opera of "Le Roi Carotte," for which Jacques Offenbach composed the music, was originally written before 1870, though, owing to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, it was not produced at the Gaité till January 15, 1872. It was intended as a political satire, and the original scheme (sent to Offenbach at Baden) ridiculed a certain "prince who declared war against his neighbour on the assurance of his ministers that all was ready." The coincidence of this fancy with what actually happened is more than striking. Three days after the dispatch of the manuscript, war was declared. We are informed by André Sardou, the dramatist's son, that, after the siege of Paris, author and composer met at Bordeaux and agreed that the course of events had been only too truly foreshadowed and that the piece must be entirely recast. The critics were very severe with "Le Roi Carotte," and reproached the collaborators with an attack on the fallen emperor; the virulence of the *Figaro* nearly caused a duel between Sardou and M. de Lafevrière. But in spite of the critics the piece had a successful run of one hundred and fifty nights.

Curiously enough, a three-act extravaganza of kindred subject and title, "La Reine Carotte" by Messrs. Clairville, Victor Bernard, and Victor Koning, was performed at the Théâtre des Menus-Plaisirs on January 13, 1872. It seems to have been one of the cant sayings of the day.

An English version of "Le Roi Carotte," by Henry S. Leigh, was produced at the Alhambra, London, June 3, 1872.

A fortnight after the first performance of "Le Roi



SARDOU AT TWO SCORE

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Carotte" Sardou produced another political piece, of which he predicted that the critics would exactly reverse the opinions expressed on "King Carrot." "Le Roi Carotte," as we have seen, was a belated satire on a state of things which had been swept away by the war. "Rabagas," which was first performed at the Vaudeville on February 1, 1872, found its subject in the political features of the day. France had once more thrown her constitution into the melting-pot. Republicanism was now in the ascendant, and the words "demagogue" and "democracy" were on everybody's lips. "Rabagas" is simply a satire on the unprincipled politicians of the day, who, having no real convictions of their own, merely followed the dictates of their own interest. But this was not the view commonly accepted. Even so able a man as Jules Simon surmised an intention in "Rabagas" to ridicule Léon Gambetta, while others found allusions to Napoléon's fire-eating minister Ollivier and to Napoléon himself. To attempt so close an identification is to narrow the author's meaning. The dramatist did not intend to write a lampoon, but to draw a typical noisy and unprincipled demagogue. But the critic with preconceived theories to uphold finds no difficulty in tracing misleading resemblances in the words of prominent politicians of a similar type. In fact, "Rabagas" is only one more instance of the skill with which Sardou seized and turned to account whatever ideas happened to be uppermost in the public mind at the time. Hugues [Rebell very plausibly identifies the prototype of a certain striking episode in the play. On October 31, 1870, the news of the surrender of Metz led to Communistic riots at Paris, and the members of the Defence Government were imprisoned in the Hôtel de Ville by bands acting under the direction of Ledru-Rollin, Victor Hugo, Gustave Flourens, and other red republicans. That same day the National Guard released the Defence Government and

turned the tables on their captors. This curious series of incidents is probably the original of the amusing scene in which the revolutionary "green" government of Camerlin is, after a brief period of power, expelled by a "yellow" government under Vuillard, which is in its turn soon over-set by a "red" one under Chaffiou. This satire might apply to several other episodes in history, French and other. "The truth is," says M. Rebell, "that Rabagas is no more *Émile Ollivier* or *Gambetta*, than the Prince of Monaco is meant for *Napoléon III.*" Curiously enough, a French journalist quoted by the same writer mentions instances—eight and nine years afterward in 1880 and 1881—in which *Gambetta* used the very words of *Rabagas*, possibly by way of a humorous allusion to the identification of Sardou's hero with himself.

The first performance of "Rabagas" nearly led to a riot. The political satire in the piece was too keen not to evoke disturbance. The critics raved, and we are told that *Edmond About* even went so far as to advise taking revolvers to the theatre. No wonder so timorous a politician as *President Thiers* ordered the governor of Paris to forbid a second performance. Fortunately *General Ladmirault* was a man of resolution, and was determined that the right of free speech should not be abrogated in deference to mob violence. The President's written order was left lying on the general's table unopened. Like *Nelson*, he turned a blind eye to the letter of his order, though he did not neglect to take ample precautions against disorder. Next morning *Thiers* heard to his horror that "Rabagas" had been played a second time. The general apologised for his forgetfulness, and sent word that the performance had passed off quietly. Would-be disturbers of the peace were simply ejected from the house, but the excitement gave a tremendous advertisement to the play, which in consequence enjoyed a splendid run.

An adaptation of "Rabagas," entitled "Robert Rabagas," by Stephen Fiske, was produced at the St. James's Theatre, London, February 25, 1873.

On June 25, 1872, Sardou, who had now been a widower for five years, married Mlle. Anna Soulié, daughter of Eudore Soulié, curator of the Museum at Versailles. Edmond de Goncourt tells in his "Journal" how the match came about. One day an engraver who was engaged in copying a picture in the gallery at Versailles consulted M. Soulié and was invited to stay to luncheon. He excused himself on the ground that Sardou was waiting for him below. The answer was a request to return and extend the same hospitable invitation to the author of "La Famille Benoiton." Sardou thus made the acquaintance of the curator's daughter, and fell in love with the young lady.

It has been suggested that the change to wedded life turned the current of Sardou's thoughts toward those domestic studies of manners and morals which for a time form quite a feature of his dramatic work. Sardou was always, like a good barometer, very susceptible to his environment, as a study of the chronology of his plays will serve to show.

The first play produced by Sardou after his marriage was the domestic drama "Andréa," played for the first time in Paris at the Gymnase on March 17, 1873. It contains some dramatic situations which might easily have developed to a tragic ending, for instance, the scene in the box of the danseuse at the opera, and the scene where Stephan escapes from the *maison de santé* and erroneously fancies that he sees a rival in his house. But, as so often happens in Sardou's plays, the threatened storm disappears as suddenly as it arose, and reconciliation comes to the temporarily disunited pair. The appearance of "Andréa" involved Sardou in charges of literary larceny, of which

he has given an amusing account in his pamphlet on "My Plagiarisms." The complainant on this occasion was J. M. Cournier, who had sent the manuscript of a play, "*Le Médecin de son Honneur*," to Montigny. The latter, it was alleged, had consulted his friend Sardou, who had abused his confidence by stealing the ideas of the piece to compose his "*Andréa*." Cournier's play was then returned to the author, marked "declined." These allegations were repeated in the newspapers, and finally formed the subject of a suit before the Tribunal of Commerce. Cournier formulated his accusation in court, and the judge, turning to Sardou, asked what answer he had to make.

"One word only: I beg that M. Cournier will be good enough to say on what precise day the manuscript of his piece was handed in at the Gymnase."

"Oh," said Cournier, "there is not the least doubt on that point. Here is the receipt: December 16, 1872."

"Well," replied Sardou, "here are some advertisements, programmes, and notices from America, establishing the fact that '*Andréa*,' which was originally written for America, was performed at New York under the title of '*Agnes*,' on September 17, 1872, that is to say, three months before the date of the deposition of M. Cournier's manuscript at the Gymnase."

Poor Cournier completely collapsed, and attributed his accusations to a failure of memory. The fortunes of Cournier were at a low ebb at the time, but the prosperous Sardou and Montigny did not press their advantage in an ungenerous spirit; they merely contented themselves with rebutting the charge of plagiarism and compelling Cournier to sign a declaration to the effect that the whole accusation had fallen to the ground.

An adaptation of "*Andréa*," entitled "*The Countess and the Dancer*," by Charles Reade, was produced at the Olympic Theatre, London, February 27, 1886.

In "L'Oncle Sam," which was played at the Vaudeville on November 6, 1873, Sardou reverted to the vagaries of the new woman, which he had already handled in "Les Femmes Fortes" and in "La Famille Benoiton." The latter play, however, differed from its predecessors in being a direct skit on American manners. We have seen how the timidity of Thiers had nearly proved fatal to "Rabagas." This time the official excuse was that the piece "satirized people who benefited our country greatly by their presence among us." The dramatist consulted some members of the American colony at Paris, among them young Mr. Washburn, son of the American minister. Their verdict was that there was nothing in the piece calculated to wound the susceptibilities of their compatriots. Indeed "L'Oncle Sam" had even been played at New York (without any great success, it is true, but without giving umbrage to Americans) some eight months before the interdiction was removed at Paris. The plot of "L'Oncle Sam" is of the slightest; in fact, the chief interest of the play centres in the bright and telling dialogue and the amusing though exaggerated characterisation.

"Les Merveilleuses," written in collaboration with Philippe Gille, and first performed at the Variétés on December 16, 1873, had a very short run, though it presented a charming reconstruction of manners under the Directory, a period which always had special attractions for Sardou. "Monsieur Garat," written for Virginie Déjazet as early as 1860, gave a picture of those times to which the dramatist was destined to revert in 1898 with his "Paméla." Possibly the comparative failure of the play was due to the fact that the radical element owed Sardou a grudge for "Rabagas," played some months previously, and it was, of course, inevitable that so soon after the fall of the Second Empire political passions should be more intense than was usual even in France.

"Le Magot," written to order for the Palais-Royal and produced at that theatre on January 14, 1874, proved a failure.

By universal consent "La Haine" divides with "Patrie" the honour of being Sardou's masterpiece. Offenbach, at that time director of the Gaité, where the play was produced on December 3, 1874, composed the incidental music. The inspiring moral of the piece is that love should triumph over revenge, and the author found a suitable environment in the strife of the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Mediæval Italy. In spite of its power, "La Haine" was an utter failure. The subject was too terrible, too sombre for the public taste at the time. The Parisians needed cheering up, not saddening, and the disastrous fighting and burning in Siena reminded them too poignantly of the horrors of the Commune. Finding that he had not hit the public taste, Sardou withdrew the piece after twenty-seven nights, with seeming unconcern, though there is no doubt that the failure of this play, on which he had based great expectations, was a sore disappointment.

In spite of the excellence of the interpretation which it received, Sardou's next piece, "Ferréol," produced at the Gymnase on November 17, 1875, was not a success. The conflict between love and duty, between Ferréol's love for his mistress and his desire not to allow the innocent d'Aigremont to be condemned, did not appeal to the public. Similarly conflicting passions in Rysoor form a weak spot even in "Patrie." The interest of such situations is too essentially subjective to lend itself to stage purposes with effect, and they are more suitably treated in a psychological novel. "Ferréol" did not do well in New York either, although the actor J. H. Stoddart in his memoirs expresses surprise at its non-success.

An adaptation of "Ferréol," entitled "Ferréol de

Meyrac," by Herbert Dausey, was produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, on February 26, 1904.

At this time a certain slackening of Sardou's literary activity becomes apparent. It was almost as though the ill success of "La Haine" and "Ferreol," especially of the former, had caused a temporary discouragement. Production did not, indeed, entirely cease, but "L'Hôtel Godelot," written in collaboration with M. Crisafulli and produced at the Gymnase on May 13, 1876, was a work of minor importance, and Sardou did not even witness its performance.

CHAPTER IX

SARDOU SCORES THREE SUCCESSES, AND BECOMES AN ACADEMICIAN

THE shadow which seemed for a time to have obscured Sardou's success was at last lifted when the striking play called "Dora" was produced at the Vaudeville on January 22, 1877. It dealt with one of the burning questions of the day, the spy mania. Sardou skilfully turned the prevalent feeling to account by laying the plot in the year 1871. The public interest in "Dora" was still further enhanced by a curious coincidence. Shortly after the first performance there was a public scandal, concerning the Austrian baroness Kaulla, who was said to be a Prussian spy, and who was a friend of de Cisse, the French minister of war. The two spies in the play are Van der Kraft and the Countess Zicka, and the plot turns on the theft of some important papers from an embassy by one of them. Probably the love story and marriage of Dora and André de Maurillac, the suspicion thrown on Dora, its triumphant rebuttal, and the reconciliation between husband and wife were the chief features that won the favour of the public.

Sardou always maintained that the garbled translations and mutilated adaptations of his work in English-speaking countries did him gross injustice. This can not be gainsaid, as is shown by the circumstances concerning the play "Dora." It drew such large houses at the Vaudeville in Paris that it attracted the attention of Squire Bancroft in London. Clement Scott and B. C. Stephenson had already adapted for manager Bancroft a very free version of Sardou's "Nos Intimes," which they entitled "Peril." Another Bowdlerized version was played throughout the

United States, by Mrs. Langtry, under the title "A Wife's Peril." Bancroft engaged the two adapters to accompany him to Paris, where at the Vaudeville they carefully studied "Dora"—its action, its business, and its effect on French audiences. Returning to England, they jointly evolved the play known there and in the United States as "Diplomacy." They recast the plot; they cut it from five acts to four; they changed French army officers into English army officers; the Franco-German misunderstandings they changed into the Anglo-Russian differences; the attempt of the German chancellery to set Europe's foreign offices swarming with spies was transmogrified into the eternal Eastern Question; the theft of an official dispatch was made to hinge on Anglo-Turkish spheres of interest. In Sardou's play the man who discovers Dora's criminality is the friend of her husband; in "Diplomacy" he is made the husband's brother. The scene in Sardou's play in which Dora resents the dishonorable proposals from Stramir is cut out. The adapters introduced the "clock-scene at Berne" which was devised and written by Mrs. (now Lady) Bancroft. In the last scenes of "Diplomacy" sympathy is worked up for the female spy, the Countess Zicka; in "Dora" she is painted in the blackest colors to the very end. Last of all, the title was changed—for a time the adapters wavered between "The Mousetrap" and "Diplomacy," finally selecting the latter. The program stated that the play was "adapted" from Sardou "by the brothers Rowe":—Mr. "Saville Rowe" (Scott) and Mr. "Bolton Rowe" (Stephenson). Mrs. Kendal played Dora; Mr. Kendal, Captain Julian Beauclerc. Bancroft was the Count Orloff and Mrs. Bancroft the Countess Zicka. With such a cast the play ran for months to crowded houses. This Bancroft-Scott-Stephenson version has since held the stage in English-speaking countries. Hundreds of writers, in these countries, have criticised

this play as if it were Sardou's. But in the light of the preceding facts it scarcely seems fair to hold Sardou responsible for such a mutilated version of his work. This adaptation was first produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, London, January 12, 1878.

On October 26, 1893, "Diplomacy" was played at Balmoral before Queen Victoria, the ex-Empress Eugénie, Princess Beatrice, Princess Louise, the Duchess of Fife, Prince Aribert of Anhalt, Prince Henry of Battenberg, and the Duke of Fife.

In June, 1877, Sardou was honoured by his election as one of the forty members of the Académie-Française in succession to the distinguished poet and author, Joseph Autran. It is said that "Dora" nearly caused the failure of Sardou's candidature to the vacant seat. Rightly or wrongly, ex-President Thiers had identified the Countess Zicka with a certain influential foreign princess with whom he was on intimate terms, and endeavoured to frustrate the candidate's election. Sardou had now been before the playgoing public for upwards of twenty years, and as the author of such works as "Nos Intimes," "Les Pattes de Mouche," "La Famille Benoiton," "Maison Neuve," "Patrie," "La Haine," and "Dora" might be deemed to have worthily earned his Academy fauteuil. On May 23d of the following year he was formally received, and on that occasion, in conformity with the usual custom, he delivered his "Discours à l'Académie," which was afterward published in the form of a pamphlet. The task of formally welcoming the new academician fell to Charles Blanc, the distinguished critic. The speaker's general tone was frankly eulogistic, though he did not hesitate roundly to express disapproval of plays like "L'Oncle Sam" and "Rabagas," as these sentences which M. Blanc delivered will show: "Permit me then to tell you that your occasional incursions into the domain of politics have not

always been happy, and that they have added nothing either to your talents or to your reputation. And more than once your wit, ordinarily so keen, has lost its edge; your pencil, elsewhere so delicate and so firm, has lost its fineness when you venture on drawing figures in a world which is not your own, as in the United States or in Monaco."

Sardou's next play, "*Les Bourgeois de Pontarcy*," also performed at the Vaudeville, on March 1, 1878, was by no means so successful as "*Dora*." Possibly some of the situations were too far-fetched and too unsavoury to please the public. An adaptation of "*Les Bourgeois de Pontarcy*," entitled "*Duty*," by James Albery, was produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, London, September 27, 1879.

One day, about this period, in showing an English visitor over his library at Marly, where most of his plays were written, Sardou explained that he worked five hours every day, and at that rate of working it took him five months to construct and write a play. "The dramatist must not be afraid of the labour of the file," he added. "The rehearsals of a five-act piece take at least five months. Look—that paper is a pen-and-ink map of Pontarcy, the scene of my latest play. Pontarcy exists only in my imagination, and to avoid any mistakes or confusion as to the movements of the personages, I have drawn up this map. Here is the 'Lower City.' The staple industry of the town is leather-dressing, and along the banks of the river are many tan-yards and water-mills. In this quarter lives a bourgeois family which presents a decided contrast to the inmates of the house on the opposite side of the square. Both these groups play an important part in my piece. The railway having been extended to Pontarcy, a row of handsome houses, with theatre, hotel, and grand café, has been built in the neighbourhood of the railway

station. Let us now pass to the 'Upper City.' First of all, there is a Château partly in ruins, and what remains of it is used as a station for the gendarmerie. The old church on the outskirts of this place was formerly a cloister. The 'Upper City' as you see, is a network of narrow streets, now comparatively deserted. In the centre there is a rather fine old Gothic fountain. I believe that this map has been of great service to me. In imagination I have gone through the streets, lodged at the Grand Hotel, inspected the Cloister, and stood in reverential frame of mind before the Gothic fountain." This anecdote is curious as showing how thoroughly the playwright entered into the life of his mimic world.

"Daniel Rochat," performed on February 16, 1880, was the second play by Sardou produced at the Comédie-Française. It dealt with some of the religious questions then agitating men's minds in France, and formed a counterpart to "Séraphine," which had appeared twelve years before. While the earlier play exhibited the excess of religious zeal and the attendant vices of hypocrisy and intolerance, "Daniel Rochat" presents the other side of the picture, the bigotry of Rochat the atheist, his intolerant refusal to accede to the desire of his wife for a religious marriage ceremony, and the resulting separation which followed so closely on the heels of the civil marriage. The whole piece was virtually a sermon on tolerance. But feeling ran too high at the time, and in spite of some excellent points it was not a success. It succeeded much better in the United States with Sara Jewett and Charles Thorne as Léa and Daniel. It was the first play brought out by Sardou after his reception at the Academy, and its comparative failure gave an added force to M. Blanc's warning. Besides being a professed free-thinker, Rochat was an ardent radical politician and leader of the extreme left in the French Chamber. In fact, the whole play was too

political in character. There were also some striking improbabilities in the plot. The marriage of Daniel and Léa was itself improbable, under the circumstances; the divorce was improbable, and the intolerance of Rochat was carried to an improbable extreme.

An adaptation of "Daniel Rochat" entitled "Roma" was produced at the Adelphi Theatre, London, November 28, 1885.

"Daniel Rochat" involved Sardou in an accusation of plagiarism. Théodore Vibert, the poet, had published on August 8, 1879, his "Martura: ou un Mariage Civil." The central idea of this poem was identical with that of "Daniel Rochat." In both works difficulties arise between husband and wife after the ceremony of civil marriage; both husbands are free-thinkers and anti-clerical; both wives insist on the union being sanctioned by the church. In fact, though the details are different, and one work a prose play, while the other is a serious poem, the general situation is identical. Moreover, it was the practice of M. Vibert to send complimentary copies of his works to all the members of the Academy, and it was shown that "Martura" was sent to Sardou between July 10 and 15, 1879, a month or so before "Daniel Rochat" was written. The inference is that the perusal of the poem and the general interest in religious questions at the time induced the playwright to select this subject for his next piece. But the method of handling it was his own. The defence set up by Sardou's friends was that the choice of this subject for "Daniel Rochat" was pure coincidence.

This was the last occasion on which Sardou handled current politics on the stage. He had found that his forte did not lie in that direction, and that neither the public nor the censors approved of the stage encroaching upon functions which were more appropriately fulfilled by the press.

In his next play, Sardou returned to the domestic comedy, choosing as his subject one of the burning questions of the day. "Divorçons," written in collaboration with Emile de Najac, was performed at the Palais-Royal on December 6, 1880. It is a farcical comedy, treating of the same matters as "Andréa," which appeared in 1873, but without the dramatic situations of the earlier play. The plot turns on a false telegram to Cyprienne, who will only give her hand to her lover Adhémar in the event of the divorce bill, then before the chamber, becoming a law. Just at that time the question of reforming the marriage laws was causing somewhat of a stir in France. As early as May, 1878, M. Naquet had begun a regular campaign throughout all France in favor of reform. But the project hung fire; the proposals were bandied to and fro between the Chamber and the Senate, and nothing practical was done. Sardou, however, quick to see what interested the public, made this subject the theme of his play, and scored another triumph. The play ran for three hundred nights, and brought 1,500,000 francs to the coffers of the Palais-Royal. Divorce plays were quite the fashion at the time, but it was noticed that "Divorçons," was the only piece on this subject in which the more honored position was assigned to the aggrieved husband. Most of the petty playwrights of the Parisian stage bespoke the sympathies of the audience for the lover.

"Divorçons" was probably the first play the real action of which begins when husband and wife are living in virtual or actual divorce, and has for its theme the means by which relations are resumed. This situation has formed the subject of many plays since then, the best known being "The Freedom of Suzanne."

Many versions of "Divorçons" have been produced in England and America. An adaptation entitled "To-Day," by Charles H. C. Brookfield, was produced at the

Comedy Theatre, London, on December 5, 1892. An adaptation entitled "The Queen's Proctor," or "Decree Nisi," by Herman Merivale, was produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, on June 2, 1896. An adaptation entitled "Mixed Relations," by Miss Kate Santly, was produced at the Royalty Theatre, London, on February 4, 1902.

"Divorçons" was first played in New York at Abbey's Park Theatre on March 14, 1882, when Alice Dunning Lingard appeared as Cyprienne. In May of the same year Grau's French Opera Company presented it with Paola Marie as Cyprienne. Since then it has been played by Madame Judic at Wallack's in 1885; by Modjeska at Wallack's in 1886; by Frau Hedwig Niemann-Raabe at Wallack's in 1888; by Réjane at Abbey's in 1895; by Duse at the Fifth Avenue in 1893; by Mrs. Fiske at the Fifth Avenue in May, 1897; by Emily Baucker under the title of "A Divorce Cure" at the Murray Hill in March, 1897; by Mrs. Fiske again in 1899 at the Fifth Avenue and later at the Manhattan. A new version by Margaret Mayo was produced by Grace George at Wallack's in April, 1907. The play has also been produced in the United States by many less known actresses in English, French, and German.

Sardou's next success, "Odette," performed at the Vaudeville on November 17, 1881, like "Andréa" and "L'Oncle Sam," brought upon the dramatist charges of plagiarism. Mario Uchard accused Sardou of having stolen ideas from his play "La Fiammina." An acrimonious wrangle followed, chiefly notable in that it provoked Sardou to write his amusing pamphlet "My Plagiarisms," published in 1882, by way of rejoinder to his detractors. Sardou denied the alleged plagiarism, and proceeded to carry the war into the enemy's country. The mere fact that the elemental passions of mankind form the staple ingredients out of which the dramatist is bound to construct his play, said Sardou, must lead sometimes to a

seeming similarity in externals. It is when we come to examine the details of the plot, the flow of the dialogue, and the minuter shades of the characterisation that it is possible to distinguish between the independent worker and the plagiarist. Tried by this touchstone Sardou must stand acquitted. He had abundance of wit and invention to work out his own details, and could not avoid accidental resemblances.

An English version of "Odette" by Clement Scott was produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, April 22, 1882. In this version there is no suicide, but "Odette" retires to a nunnery to the sound of slow music!

"Odette" was revived as recently as April 8, 1905, when it was played in Italian by Eléonora Duse before a crowded house at the Nouveau Théâtre. Sardou himself was present at the performance, and warmly appreciated the interpretation of the title-rôle by the great Italian actress. Seated near him was Mme. Blanche Pierson of the Comédie-Française, who created the part in 1881.

The four-act drama of "Fédora," which has for its theme nihilism and other phases of Russian life, and was performed for the first time on December 11, 1882, practically owes its inspiration to Sarah Bernhardt. The great actress herself relates that at this period she was much in need of money. She still owed 100,000 francs to the Comédie-Française, forfeit for her secession in 1880.

On April 17 of that year she played Clorinde in the revival of Augier's "L'Aventurière." She was savagely attacked by the critics Sarcey, Paul de Saint-Victor, and Auguste Vitu. The very next day, the 18th, Sarah wrote to M. Perrin, director of the Comédie-Française, to say that they had not allowed her adequate time for rehearsal, and she forthwith left Paris for Havre, resolved to quit the stage altogether. The Comédie-Française brought an action before the first Chamber of the Civil Tribunal

on June 18th for breach of contract, and Madame Bernhardt was ordered to pay the Comédie-Française one hundred thousand francs damages and to forfeit her share (forty-four thousand francs) in the reserve fund as a *Sociétaire*. This debt still hung over her. To add to her financial troubles she had lately married the actor Damala, and her seventeen-year-old son Maurice, to whom she could refuse nothing, had asked her assistance to acquire the Ambigu Theatre. For Damala, she leased the Théâtre des Nations. Both of these theatres cost money. Her debts grew so large that in a short time placards posted on the walls of Paris announced that "Madame Sarah Bernhardt-Damala's diamonds and jewelry will be sold by auction at the Hotel des Ventres." The sale produced 178,000 francs.

In this desperate financial strait, she grew anxious for some lucrative engagement which would provide the sinews of war, and signed an agreement with Bertrand and Deslandes, directors of the Vaudeville, on the express condition that "the piece to be played by me shall be written for me by Victorien Sardou, the only man who can understand me and do what I want." She wanted a rôle and not a piece, something that would give scope to her talents, something easy and not too expensive to mount, so that she could travel with it, and not have too many players with whom to share the proceeds. Bertrand called upon Sardou, and asked whether he had a part for Mme. Bernhardt. The dramatist promised to think the matter over, and next day informed Bertrand that he had found a promising subject. He had lately been reading the Memoires of Antonio Perez, the secretary of Philip II. of Spain. There he found the suggestions required. All through the summer of 1882 Sardou worked at his play. When completed, it entirely satisfied the requirements of Mme. Bernhardt, for it was "a rôle in four acts," though

she humorously added that the part allotted to Pierre Berton, her leading man, was "altogether too extensive." The announcement of a new play by "Sardou for Sarah"—the two S's, as they were called—caused quite a flutter in play-going circles in Paris, and there was a great rush for places at the first performance. Sarah determined to make her part a triumph. She practiced eight hours a day at "Fédora," and then for a change wound up the day by playing in "Les Mères Ennemies" at the Ambigu. Madame Bernhardt gives an amusing account of "Fédora" from her point of view: "Knowing that I am a tragédienne, Sardou has brought out all my strong points. If I had had any weak points, he would have made use of them, too. But I have none. Ah! if I were not Sarah, I would like to be Sardou."

Madame Bernhardt and Pierre Berton were inimitable in their parts, and the piece was brilliantly successful. Thenceforth "Fédora" formed part of her permanent repertoire. In December, 1904, in the course of a long and successful tour through Europe, Mme. Bernhardt visited Constantinople, taking with her six plays, three of which, including "Fédora," were by Sardou. It is amusing to add that all three were prohibited by the Turkish authorities, "La Tosca" because a prefect of police is killed in the play; "Fédora" because the subject is nihilism; and "La Sorcière" because the Koran is mentioned in the text. Of the other three plays, Racine's "Phèdre" was not allowed to be performed because it was a Greek drama, and Rostand's "L'Aiglon" on the ground that it was calculated to give the Sultan's subjects a false idea of European politics. The only piece that passed the censors was Dumas's "La Dame aux Camélias" !

An adaptation of "Fédora" by Herman Merivale was produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, May 5, 1883.

CHAPTER X

THÉODORA AND LA TOSCA SUCCEED, ALTHOUGH ATTACKED BY THE CRITICS

THE drama of "Théodora," for which Jules Massenet composed the incidental music, was produced at the Porte Saint-Martin, under the management of Felix Duquesnel, on December 26, 1884. M. Duquesnel had been manager of the Odéon, but left for the Chatelet, where he made a fortune with the production of "Michael Strogoff." He retired with two millions of francs to a villa at Croissy, where he and his wife devoted themselves to growing roses. Sardou urged him to return to produce his piece "Théodora." Duquesnel wavered, but finally agreed to come if his wife were willing. She read the play, was delighted with it, and consented.

In 1884, few but professional scholars knew much about Byzantium. When Duquesnel read the names of the personages of the play he was quite taken back. "What a singular epoch!" he exclaimed with a not unnatural distrust. "Justinian! Byzantium!" It made one think rather of the institutes than of an historical drama. Sardou was at that time almost the only author in Paris who had studied the period in detail. "That evening by lamplight," continued the first reader of "Théodora," "I opened the manuscript-book bound in greyish paper. At one o'clock in the morning I was still reading—held, as they say, feverishly gripped by the dramatic interest of the situations, and reading over several times the most effective scenes and playing them over in my mind's eye." Duquesnel conceived the happy idea of asking Massenet to write the incidental music. Sardou doubted whether the composer would accept. However, the three dined together at the Café

Anglais, and excerpts were read from the manuscript. Massenet, full of enthusiasm, hastened to the battered café piano, and began the chords of the striking funeral hymn in the fourth act. The selection of such a subject as Justinian, Theodora, and the Byzantine Court afforded an unique opportunity for spectacular effects, and also enabled Sardou to indulge his taste for historical and archæological research. But he did not escape severe criticism on this very score; indeed, his display of erudition appeared to provoke it. M. Darcel, the director of the Gobelins factory, and an archæologist of repute, wrote a learned critique in *La Gazette des Arts et de la Curiosité*. Sardou was bound to accept the challenge, and controverted in a very amusing manner, one by one, the points raised by M. Darcel. These latter were essentially questions for a committee of experts to decide, and were of such a character that, even supposing the dramatist wrong on every point, the merits of the play would not be thereby affected. No illusion would be destroyed if the *manganon* and the *sphendone* were not quite of the orthodox shape, and the enjoyment of the spectators would not be impaired by any suspicion of architectural anachronism involved by the application of ornaments which may or may not be minarets. Among other things, M. Darcel objected that the use of a table-fork by Théodora was a glaring anachronism. Sardou's answer was that the first fork known to history came from Byzantium itself, and was used by the Empress Helena some two centuries before the time of Théodora; this fork is now preserved in the Museum at Trèves. Another critic, M. Fouquier, objected to the use of blue glass in Justinian's cabinet. Sardou showed that there is at the British Museum a blue glass vase bearing the name of Thutmes III., and that at Pompeii window-frames were found with fragments of glass still adhering. It would be tedious to pursue the matter at greater length. To the confusion of the experts who dif-

On the revival in 1902 the critics again raised objections to Sardou's history, which bladders he pierced with a few strokes of the pen. Then the experts at the museums tried their hand, and concocted all sorts of pedantic controversies relating to the *mise-en-scène*. But these polemics merely contributed to the marvellous success of the play.

An adaptation of "Théodora" by Robert Buchanan was produced at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, November 18, 1889.

The love drama of "Georgette," performed at the Vaudeville on December 9, 1885, failed to command success, apparently because the piece did not end with marriage and "they lived happily ever afterward."

Sardou's next venture, "Le Crocodile," a comedy in five acts with incidental music by Jules Massenet, was coldly received at the Porte Saint-Martin, where it was performed on December 21, 1886. Various reasons have been assigned for this lack of success. The real cause of this want of appreciation was doubtless the fact that the audience expected an entirely different kind of play from the author of "Les Pattes de Mouche," "Patrie," and "La Haine." Instead of the work which they went to see, they were treated to a kind of extravaganza, a mere "pantomime," "milk for babes" (*bouillie de bébé*), as the critics stigmatized it. The author did not take such remarks too deeply to heart, though he vindicated his position by describing his motives in venturing on such an unusual genre of play. "This time," Sardou wrote, "I worked for my daughter and her friends, and the laughter of these little ones prevented me from hearing the sneers of some of the grown-ups. It was my daughter who dictated my programme. 'Since I cannot see any of your grown-up pieces,' she said to me one morning, 'make one for me for once in your life.' How could I resist such an entreaty? I did not resist. 'Well, what do you want?' 'First of all, pretty

scenery.' 'Well?' 'Then I should like the scene to be laid in some dreadful, savage, unknown country.' 'Good. Then you want Swiss Family Robinson.' 'Yes, something like that, with very unhappy heroes at the commencement, and very happy ones at the end.'" Such is Sardou's account of the inspiration of "Le Crocodile." The young lady was so delighted that she begged her father to let her see "my piece" again. "That is the best approbation. This time I have worked for the children. Let them enjoy themselves, that is all I ask. So much the worse if the others are bored."

The most emotional of all the dramas of Sardou, "La Tosca," first played at the Porte Saint-Martin on November 24, 1887, affords a striking instance of the diversity of opinion not seldom found between the critics and the public. The chorus of critics smote the piece hip and thigh, and Francisque Sarcey went so far as to dub it "a pantomime." The dramatist was not a little nettled by this treatment, and retorted: "I knew that Sarcey was blind; but I did not think that he was deaf too. He really did not need this new infirmity."

In Paris, as elsewhere, journalists are often admitted to witness the final rehearsals of a new play. One paper—*Gil Blas*—abused this privilege by printing an analysis of "La Tosca" on the very morning of the first performance. In assertion of his rights, Sardou brought an action against the offender and won it. The general public was delighted by Sarah Bernhardt, who threw into the title-rôle a marvellous force, and secured a regular triumph for interpreters and author. The drama ran for two hundred nights at the Porte Saint-Martin, and has since been frequently revived and taken all round the world by Sarah Bernhardt. How enduring is the popularity of the drama is shown by the fact that when it was revived on January 21, 1899, it ran for fifty-seven nights at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt.

In January, 1900, an operatic version of "La Tosca," in three acts, with music by Giacomo Puccini, was produced at Rome. Both at Rome and at Covent Garden Theatre, London, on July 12 of the same year, it was received with favour. Fraulein Ternina appeared in the title-rôle.

An English version of "La Tosca" by F. C. Grove and Henry Hamilton was produced at the Garrick Theatre, London, November 28, 1889.

The brilliantly successful "La Tosca" was followed by one of Sardou's failures, "Marquise," played at the Vaudeville on February 12, 1889. Even Madame Réjane in the title-rôle failed to save the piece, which had some points of resemblance with "Georgette." The subject of the play was a scarlet woman grown sedate with years, and the situation brought about by the refusal of the neighbors among whom she had settled to recognize her. The piece proved altogether unsuited for the taste of the time.

A month later, however, Sardou had his revenge. His three-act comedy "Belle-Maman," written in collaboration with Raymond Deslandes, was performed at the Gymnase on March 15, 1889, and enjoyed a good run. The humor of this farcical piece turns on the ridiculous spectacle of a mother-in-law who, excited by the marriage of her daughter, takes to giddy ways and flirtations late in life. Ten years later, on October 19, 1899, "Belle-Maman" was revived at the Vaudeville, and ran for fifty-two nights, reaching on November 14 of that year its three-hundredth performance.

CHAPTER XI

THERMIDOR PROHIBITED, SANS-GÊNE AND CLÉOPÂTRE SUCCESSFUL

It was at the instance of Sarah Bernhardt that Sardou wrote "Cléopâtre," as in the case of "Fédora." With incidental music by Xavier Leroux, it was performed at the Porte Saint-Martin on October 23, 1890. The great tragédienne had several times expressed the desire to interpret the character of the Egyptian Queen. Sardou hesitated for a long time, possibly because he shrunk from directly challenging comparison with Shakespeare. In fact, it has been noticed that only the messenger scene reminds one to any extent of "Antony and Cleopatra." At length he yielded, and began to write the play in collaboration with Emile Moreau, the same dramatist who some years later helped him to produce "Madame Sans-Gêne" and "Dante." An attack of influenza prevented the completion of the play, as was intended, in time for the great exhibition held at Paris in 1889 in commemoration of the Centenary of the French Revolution. Thanks to Madame Bernhardt, "Cléopâtre" drew good houses for 80 nights, the performance on November 1 realizing as much as 11,500 francs.

Sardou was often accused of sneering at Shakespeare. As the accusation was rarely made in a tangible form, it was difficult for him to refute it. At last, however, it was formally made in a leading article in the London *Daily Telegraph* of August 27, 1890, apropos of the forthcoming production by Madame Bernhardt of his play of "Cléopâtre" in Paris. Sardou wrote to the *Telegraph* under date of September 24, 1890:

"The writer of your article should have verified his assertions. He is wrong when he stated that my play of 'Cléopâtre' is an adaptation of that of Shakespeare. He would have done better had he waited to see the piece before making that assertion. He did not neglect also to repeat to the world the famous saying which has been put into my mouth concerning Shakespeare, to wit: 'that he had not the least talent.' But your writer forgot to prove that I really uttered these words. It is not sufficient to attribute imbecile sayings to me, it must be proved that I uttered them. It is true that I am not one of those idolatrous persons who admire Shakespeare without reserve, and I venture to believe that his statue in Paris usurps the place which better belongs to our own Corneille. But it is a far cry from this belief to the opinion falsely attributed to me, and I defy your contributor to cite a saying of mine in which this monstrosity could be found. He has not even the excuse of making his charges in good faith, for I have frequently protested publicly against this fiction. If he should pretend that my protests were unknown to him, I would reply that no self-respecting writer has any right to claim knowledge of the accusation and ignorance of the defence."

Independently of its literary or dramatic merit, "Thermidor," performed at the Comédie-Française on January 24, 1891, is one of Sardou's most famous plays, owing to the stormy reception it met, and its final prohibition by the government. The author never concealed the fact that in politics he was a monarchist, although a liberal-minded one, and as "Rabagas" had excited the apprehensions of M. Thiers, so now "Thermidor" alarmed President Carnot's cabinet. Its anti-radical bias, through the machinations of M. Clemenceau, caused such an uproar at the second performance on January 26, that two of the Ministers, Constans and Bourgeois, were frightened into prohibiting its further performance at the Comédie-Française or any other theatre subventioned by the government. On the 27th, accordingly, "Dépit Amoureux" and "Tartuffe" were substituted. But the public refused to give them a hearing, and the performance was suspended by 9 o'clock and the

money refunded. Even on the 29th the house was still in an agitated state.

Sardou had originally intended the piece for the Porte Saint-Martin, where Coquelin was playing at the time. But Jules Claretie, director of the Comédie-Française, being anxious to induce the great actor to rejoin his establishment, opened negotiations which resulted in the return of Coquelin, and Marais also, to the Théâtre-Français, and the transfer of "Thermidor" to the Government theatre. "Thermidor" had been planned twenty years before in the time of the Commune, the suggested title being "La Dernière Charette" or "The Last Tumbril." Like "La Sorcière" and several other plays, it was withdrawn years afterward from its retirement, and completed with a view to its performance on the stage of the Porte Saint-Martin.

The prohibition, of course, only affected houses receiving a subvention from the state, and there was nothing to prevent the performance of "Thermidor" on some other stage; but it was not revived till March 3, 1896, when it was played in the theatre for which it had been originally written. Coquelin had in the meantime returned to the Porte Saint-Martin, and helped to make the fortune of the piece. To Marais, however, who had played the part of Martial Hugon so brilliantly, the stoppage of "Thermidor" was a disaster. He had thrown up an excellent position at the Gymnase, and the crisis at the Comédie-Française seems to have disheartened him altogether. Deeply involved in debt, he fell seriously ill, and in an attack of delirium threw himself out of a window, his death resulting in September, 1891.

Reference has already been made to the keen interest taken by Sardou in history and archæology, but no period had such fascination for him as that of the French Revolution. No less than six of his plays deal with this period: "Monsieur Garat," "Les Merveilleuses," "Thermidor,"

"Madame Sans-Gêne," "Paméla," "Robespierre." In all these pieces the movement and human interest form the life-blood of the play; these claimed his first care, the archæology and history taking only a subordinate though still important place. He studied no period with greater thoroughness, and from his youth up had been familiar with spots made memorable by its most striking episodes. When "Thermidor" was transferred to the Comédie-Française various modifications were made in the piece, but on its revival it was restored to its original and superior form. The famous "Convention" scene, for instance, of the 9th Thermidor, Year II [July 27, 1794] was reinstated, and several alterations made in the dénouement. For example, Martial Hugon was not killed at the Porte Saint-Martin, and Fabienne Lecoulteux with her companions in misfortune was rescued from the last tumbril by a kind of popular rising provoked by Martial and Labussière just at the very moment when the Convention was staying the course of the frightful summary executions. Objections have been raised to the rescue on historical grounds. It is a fact that the last tumbril was attacked, but it is alleged that Commandant Henriot's gendarmes recovered possession of the last "batch" of victims. Such criticism, however, is merely captious. In obscure points of this kind, on which certainty is unattainable, some latitude must be allowed to the dramatist. Provided that the main outline of the picture be correctly drawn, no illusion is destroyed by an arbitrary decision on petty points of history or archæology over which experts may be left to wrangle. Félix Duquesnel, who as Director of the Porte Saint-Martin was keenly interested in the play, thought that it made a more artistic ending to rescue Fabienne than to allow her to perish merely because she could not bring herself to save her life by falsely declaring herself about to become a mother.

"Théodora," "Thermidor" and the four-act comedy

of "Madame Sans-Gêne" are the best examples of Sardou's method of constructing historical plays, and of the scrupulous care he devoted to the general accuracy of his details, both in the story itself and in the staging of the piece.

In writing "Madame Sans-Gêne," as subsequently in "Dante," Sardou had the collaboration of Emile Moreau. The history of this collaboration is not without interest. The real Madame Sans-Gêne was an orphan girl, Thérèse Figueuer. When she was eighteen years old, in 1793, she doffed her petticoats, put on the breeks, and enlisted in the army. She followed the Emperor in his great campaigns, was wounded several times, and died peacefully in 1861 in an asylum at the age of eighty-six. She was one of a number of young women who as vivandières followed the eagles in the Napoleonic wars. With her as heroine, Emile Moreau had made a play which he was reading to his old friend Sardou. During the reading Sardou suddenly cried: "What a play it would make if, instead of this obscure vivandière, you took Catherine Hubscher, who was a regimental laundress, and became the wife of Sergeant Lefebvre; he won the baton of a marshal of France and made her a Duchess." Moreau was struck by the interruption. "Indeed it would," he cried. "Let us write it together, and I will throw this away." So said, so done, and they collaborated in writing "Mme. Sans-Gêne."

The piece was originally intended for Le Grand Théâtre. But that house had proved a financial failure, and the play—together with Madame Réjane, for whom the title-rôle had been written—was transferred to the Vaudeville, where it was performed on October 27, 1893, with great success.

The piece was revived at the Vaudeville on May 22, 1900, and was played no fewer than 209 times during the exposition of that year. On July 31, it reached its 500th performance, and the occasion was celebrated by a grand supper at the Restaurant Paillard in the Champs-Élysées, at

which Madame Réjane presided, having Sardou on her right hand and Emile Moreau on her left. On October 31 of that same year, it was played for the 600th time in Paris. "Madame Sans-Gêne" is one of Sardou's most diverting comedies, and the scene between the Emperor and Marshal Lefebvre is a marvel of stage-craft.

Adapted from "Madame Sans-Gêne" was the light romantic opera of "The Duchess of Danzig," with book and lyrics by Henry Hamilton and music by Ivan Caryll, which was produced at the Lyric Theatre, London, on October 17, 1903, and enjoyed long and successful runs in London and the Provinces. It was also produced in the United States.

An adaptation of "Madame Sans-Gêne" by J. Comyns Carr was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, London, on April 10, 1897, with Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in the leading rôles.

In his next venture, "Gismonda," Sardou temporarily abandoned modern or recent times, and went back to mediæval Athens for his historical setting. The selection of an obscure though interesting corner of history enabled him to give his characters a picturesque environment. The critics were surprised to find how slightly mediæval Greece had figured in history; on the stage it was entirely novel.

"Gismonda" was specially written for Sarah Bernhardt, who had just taken the Renaissance Theatre, where it was performed on October 31, 1894.

The production of "Marcelle," brought out at the Gymnase on December 21, 1895, was the last occasion on which Madame Pasca—who had created the part of Séraphine nearly thirty years before—played on a Paris stage. It is one of Sardou's less important pieces, and contains some far-fetched situations, the scene, for instance, in which Marcelle proclaims that she has a lover, in order to shield her brother, who had in a drunken quarrel killed a man before his sister's very door.

CHAPTER XII

SARDOU AS A SPIRITUALIST

SARDOU's next play, produced early in 1897, was called "Spiritisme."

There are various references in the writings of his contemporaries to the fact that he was a believer in spiritualism. We have seen him in his younger days dissecting the heart of man anatomically. Later on, toward 1861, we find him seeking the soul through spiritualism, and that is not one of the least curious means his intellect employed in its quest of the new and the unknown. "In the early sixties," writes Jules de Marthold, "there existed a society of Spiritualists presided over by a certain Rivail, ex-manager of one of the boulevard theatres, christened Allan-Kardoc by a spirit, that of suicide probably, for in these séances they chiefly invoked those who had of their own will passed unbidden into eternity, such as Gérard de Nerval, for instance. Sardou held a distinguished position among these adepts, and published in his capacity of medium a 'voyage fait dans la planète de Jupiter.' I know not how much of the mysterious the ghosts of the Champs-Élysées may have been able to impart to our dramatic author, but he is most certainly somewhat of a sorcerer, and he, as certainly, has the power of magic."

Adolphe Brisson, in one of his "Portraits Intimes," tells of a séance given by an Italian medium famous in Paris some years ago, who exhibited in New York City in 1909, one Signora Eusapia Paladino. From Brisson's disclosure it is apparent that Sardou was not the only one among the celebrities of Paris who believed in spiritualism. Among them he mentions Camille Flammarion, astronomer, mathematician, physicist, and geologist, who was instru-

mental in importing this Signora Paladino from Naples. Students of these sciences are often of a rather skeptical turn of mind, and it is all the more remarkable that Flammarion should so implicitly believe in the spiritualistic manifestations of Signora Paladino. Yet these skeptical Parisians all testified that they had felt tables moving under Signora Paladino's fingers, had seen inanimate objects flying through the air, and that at her séances they had felt the pressure of spirit hands.

M. Brisson informs us that the party which assembled in M. Flammarion's study included some half-dozen distinguished Parisians, among whom was Sardou. The medium herself, according to M. Brisson, could not be considered of a dangerous beauty, as "her face was a network of wrinkles, and covered with the scars of smallpox." But he was impressed by her piercing eyes.

"At the beginning of the sitting," says M. Brisson, "Sardou displayed his usual marvellous talent for conversation. Yet on this particular evening he did not attempt to dazzle us with his customary anecdotic brilliancy. On the contrary, he was most solemn, and not, as is so often the case, mocking and satirical. There is no more sincere believer in spiritualism than Sardou, and his conviction has the essential character of implicit faith. It is not feverish, it is not changeable, but solid and immutable. Sardou does not show any signs of irritation when he hears attacks upon or remarks against spiritualism. He makes no attempt to refute, but merely laughs at them."

"There are people" (says Sardou, through the pen of M. Brisson,) "with whom it is useless to argue. Their incredulity is proof against attack. They refuse to accept any evidence which is contrary to their theories. If you prove a fact to them, they admit it, but the next day deny their admission. The fear of ridicule with them destroys the love of truth."

Sardou thus told the history of his conversion. He was living as a poor student in a garret in the Latin quarter. A bed, a writing-table, and a spinet made up the furniture of this poor apartment. This piano was dear to Sardou, for it came to him from a sister whom he had lost. Yet he treated it with little outward show of affection, for he had converted it into a receptacle for rubbish. Articles of clothing, books, pamphlets, and packages of newspapers were heaped upon it, and no friendly hand ever woke to life the slumbering tones of its corroded strings.

One evening the young playwright was hard at work scourging vice and rewarding virtue in the fifth act of a melodrama, when he suddenly heard faint sounds of music behind him. He whirled round in his chair. No one was in the room except himself. Nevertheless, the piano was sounding as if fingers were flying over the keys. He looked attentively at the key-board, for the instrument was open, and he saw that the ivory keys were moving as if impelled by unseen fingers. He watched them closely. Though the keys were covered with dust, the spirit fingers that were moving them left no trace behind them. When the melody, an old air by Haydn, was ended, the piano again became mute. Sardou pinched himself to make sure that he was not dreaming, but he was wide awake. He went to bed, but slept little that night, and the next morning he hastened to visit a friend who was acquainted with all the mysteries of modern spiritualism.

"It is very simple," said the friend when he had listened attentively to Sardou's account. "You are a medium, but you have been unaware of your powers. There are many people like yourself."

This revelation surprised Sardou, but he soon found, he tells us, that it was the truth. He found himself capable of bringing about all sorts of remarkable phenomena. He could produce raps from tables, and could materialize spirits.

He received mysterious communications written by beings from the other world. Sometimes the spirits would seize his hands, and with inconceivable rapidity would draw wonderful designs of scenes and buildings which he had never seen.

Here M. Brisson's narrative may be left for a moment to glance at some corroborative matter in a recent work by Jules Claretie on Victor Hugo: corroborative not of the objective truth of the spiritualistic phenomena, but of the truth of the allegations as to Sardou's belief in them. M. Claretie says that while Hugo was in exile in Guernsey he whiled away the weary days by "conversations with the other world," by means of table-tipping. He adds that Madame de Girardin had brought the fad into fashion. It had been imported from America into Paris. Victor Hugo used to preside at these meetings, and there are in existence hundreds of pages of written matter giving the words rapped out by spirits in the form of dialogues between them and the members of Hugo's family.

M. Paul Meurice was in possession of these manuscripts, and once consulted Sardou as to the advisability of publishing them. "Why not?" replied the dramatist, "the manifestations of the invisible world are indisputable facts." In short, Sardou advised M. Meurice to publish all these manuscripts written by the unknown. It seems that spirits converse in both prose and verse. "But," adds M. Claretie, "I suspect that this unknown who wrote such clever verse and prose was no other than Victor Hugo himself, although he himself may not have known it. But it would not have been possible to offer so simple an explanation to Victor Hugo; it would have made him seriously angry. Let me repeat: he firmly believed in the reality of these manifestations and of the voices of the other world. He was as firm a believer in them as was Sardou. He would admit of no discussion about the matter, but merely said that facts

could not be debated, and he accepted the phenomena as genuine." M. Claretie closes with some moralising on the curiosities of genius, on the strange fact that the men who dwell on intellectual peaks should accept without question the mysteries of the abysses below.

To return to the narrative of M. Brisson. Sardou, he tells us, informed the company assembled at M. Flammarion's house that he was in the habit of consulting the spirits for advice concerning his course in life. He even asserted that when he was puzzled in the construction of a tangled plot his spirit friends helped him out of his difficulty. But the most remarkable story told by Sardou to his friends was to the effect that one day while he was seated at his desk, writing, a bunch of roses suddenly appeared at the side of his ink-stand. They were evidently freshly plucked, and the dew still lay upon their petals. At first he imagined that they had been tossed in through the window, but the window was closed. Furthermore, they had obviously descended vertically down from the ceiling. "This seems incredible," continued Sardou, "but we all know that the passage of flowers through opaque bodies is one of the most frequent manifestations of the skill of the jugglers in India."

It is unnecessary here to follow Brisson in his continuation of the account of Signora Paladino's spiritualistic séances. The so-called mysteries of these gatherings are about the same in all countries: darkness, a medium behind a curtain, spirit hands, spirit voices, and guitars and tambourines sounding from the medium's cabinet. There is nothing remarkable in all these things. But what is, perhaps, remarkable is that the distinguished assembly seemed impressed with such phenomena, that M. Flammarion seemed "pale and agitated," that Sardou, on the other hand, seemed extremely animated, that as they parted he said to M. Brisson: "I hope that you have been impressed.

for I think we have had what may be called an excellent séance."

This pronounced interest in occult phenomena naturally left its mark on Sardou's plays. "Spiritisme," played at the Renaissance on February 8, 1897, turns on these mysteries. It was not a success. The general public probably regards the subject of spiritualism with indifference. It has been suggested, too, that the disaster of the burning of the Charity Bazaar in the Rue Jean Goujon on May 4th of that year militated against the piece. The nerves of the public were said to be too severely shaken for the time to relish a play which included a fire and a railway accident in the plot. It is very problematical, however, whether we have here the real reasons for the comparative failure of "Spiritisme." The truth is that the subject itself is utterly undramatic. In a scene such as the discussion between Davidson and Parisot we have a mere pamphlet masquerading as a play. Sardou's interest in the subject led him astray.

"Spiritisme" was produced in the United States with Miss Virginia Harned and Nelson Wheatcroft in the leading rôles; it was fairly successful.

CHAPTER XIII

ROBESPIERRE, DANTE, LA SORCIÈRE— PLAYS OF THE END

IN 1898 and 1899, Sardou returned to the period of the French Revolution. The play "Paméla" he set in the Directory time.

This picturesque epoch had provided a framework for one of his earliest successes, "Monsieur Garat," nearly forty years previously, and also for a delightful but not altogether successful comedy, "Les Merveilleuses," twenty years before. The new play was well received on its first performance at the Vaudeville, on February 11, 1898, and favorably reviewed in the press; but it had only a short run, in spite of the attraction of Madame Réjane in the title-rôle. The play turns on the fate of the child Louis XVII., who, by the aid of Paméla, supported by faithful royalists, manages to escape from the prison at the Temple, where he was confined under the care of Paméla's husband, Bergerin. The plot is simple, but the picture of the sufferings of the Dauphin and of his loyal friends succeeded in stirring the emotions of the audience. The actual fate of the poor boy is, like the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask, one of the standing riddles of history which in all probability never will find a generally accepted solution. Some assert that he escaped to America, and under the name of Eleazar Williams died there. Others believe that under the name of Naundorff he lived at Berlin for many years by his trade as a clockmaker, and died at Delft in 1845. Many specious arguments are put forward by those who hold this belief, but the weight of probability inclines to the official view that he died in prison at the Temple in the year 1795 as the result of harsh usage and privation.

According to those who uphold the escape theory, the boy who died in the prison in 1795 was a substitute, who was smuggled in to save the Dauphin. In a case where certainty is unattainable the dramatist is surely at liberty to select whichever version lends itself best to his art. Years afterward (in 1909) Pierre Decourcelles selected the boy Louis XVII. as the hero of a play called "Le Roy sans Royaume."

In his next play, "Robespierre," written for Sir Henry Irving, translated by Sir Henry's son, Laurence Irving, and performed by Sir Henry at the London Lyceum on April 15, 1899, Sardou again went to the French Revolution for his theme. He had maintained a strong interest in Robespierre almost from his boyhood, as an incident related by himself serves to show. In the year 1845 or 1846 young Sardou attended a children's party at the house of a family friend, Madame de Boismont, in the Rue d'Enfer. He there met and danced with an old lady who interested him greatly. "After the dance, during which she questioned me on my studies, my masters, my school, I asked Madame de Boismont who the good lady was." He was told that she was Madame Le Bas, the mother of Philippe Le Bas, and the widow of the member of the convention. "I was reading at the time Thiers's 'Revolution,' and cried out 'the man who killed himself?'"

[It may be interpolated here that Le Bas, at the famous session of the Ninth Thermidor, demanded to share Robespierre's fate, and then shot himself.]

"Madame de Boismont mentioned my exclamation to Madame Le Bas, who made a sign for me to sit by her side, and I went, quite charmed at the idea of having taught the Lady's Chain to that widow of Thermidor. Naturally Madame Le Bas spoke to me of Thiers, of the Revolution, of Robespierre, and as she observed that I was somewhat lukewarm for her hero, she did not fail to say that he had

been 'much calumniated by his enemies,' and that I would certainly have liked him, 'he was so kind and affectionate toward young people.' "

A few years later young Sardou was again brought into personal connection with the Robespierre traditions. He had made the acquaintance of M. Deschamps, Robespierre's godson. This gentleman had a son who, like Sardou, was a medical student, and walked with him every morning to the Necker Hospital. The two young men used to talk of the Revolution on the way, and no doubt Sardou gathered many ideas of the character and ambitions of Robespierre on these occasions.

"Robespierre" proved a great success in London, and when Sir Henry Irving and Miss Ellen Terry, at the close of the London season, sailed on October 15, 1899, for a five months' tour in America, it created such a furore that the distinguished interpreters were unable to return to England till June, 1900.

In 1891 Sardou had given in "Thermidor" a picture of the last day of the Reign of Terror. With the Terror fell, on that Ninth Thermidor, Maximilien Robespierre, the monster. In "Robespierre" Sardou draws another Maximilien, of a more heroic mould. He is here the sincere patriot, who is firmly convinced that the freedom of the people, won at such tremendous cost, could only be preserved by severe measures. M. Rebell suggests that Sardou intended to depict him as the incarnation of the Revolution, and has with that end in view magnified and ennobled the bloodthirsty tyrant. It is Carlyle's view: "Stricter man, according to his formula, to his credo, and his cant of probities, benevolences, pleasures of virtue, and such like, lived not in that age." The colossal conceit of the man, too, is revealed in utterances such as his reply to Vaughan: "Mr. Fox is mistaken; France can do nothing with a child like the Dauphin. She wants a man, and that man is my-

self"; a saying which is all of a piece with Robespierre's recorded last words: "all is lost! the brigands triumph," for they made the realisation of his dream impossible.

We have seen how Sardou, unlike Alexandre Dumas, was not content to write a play merely, but religiously attended the rehearsals and supervised the minutest details, to ensure that his ideas of action and scenery should be carried out. "Robespierre," however, had not the advantage of the author's personal supervision. Though invited to do so, he declined to make the journey to London, even to witness the first-night performance at the Lyceum. He dreaded the prospect of the dinners and speeches to which he would be compelled to submit. "That no longer agrees with my time of life. Besides, I have never had much taste for such things."

The lyrical comedy of "La Fille de Tabarin," in which Sardou and Paul Ferrier furnished the libretto in verse, while Gabriel Pierné was responsible for the music, was performed at the Opéra-Comique on February 20, 1901. This piece is officially described as a "lyrical comedy," on the ground that the parts allotted to the sister arts of poetry and music are of equal importance, instead of the libretto being merely a peg whereon to hang the melody, as is very often the case in a comic opera. Though not devoid of interest, the piece could scarcely be called a success. The story was slight, and the music scholarly, yet undramatic. Of Pierné's music one of the critics wrote: "He seems to be saying all the time: 'see how strong I am in fugue, counterpoint, and instrumentation.'"

Tabarin, the hero of the piece, is an historical character, who retired from the stage with a fortune about 1630, in the reign of Louis XIII., and set up as a country gentleman in Poitou. The manner of his death is uncertain. Some authorities, among them Paul de Saint-Victor, maintain that the ex-actor was murdered by some of the neighbour-

ing gentry, who resented the intrusion of an outsider into their order. Sardou makes Tabarin shoot himself. But as the ordinary unlettered man has never even heard of Tabarin, the playwright was justified in killing him in the most dramatic way. This strolling player of the seventeenth century, whom Boileau castigated as "unclassical," La Fontaine immortalized in "Le Cochon, La Chèvre et Le Mouton;" and Molière even took one whole scene in "Les Fourberies de Scapin" from the buffoon of the Pont Neuf.

The farces of Tabarin were first published in 1632; four editions appeared within the year, and they have been frequently reprinted. Mondor was not his master (as in Sardou's play), but his apothecary. Tabarin played in the Place Dauphine at the end of the Pont Neuf, and crowds came to see him.

The death of Tabarin on the stage gave rise to a discussion on stage conventions in the "Intermédiaire des Chercheurs et Curieux," to which Sardou made a contribution. This journal is the French equivalent of the London "Notes and Queries." After enumerating various conventions, such as the sloping of the stage itself, the fact that doors open from the inside outward, and that a meal on the stage lasts at the most six minutes instead of three-quarters of an hour, Sardou went on to remark that realism in such matters would be condemned by the public as false art. Similarly, a death on the stage must not be a prolonged agony: "it must be rapid and seemly. No doubt it must conform as far as possible to the nature of the supposed malady. But it is a question of degree: it must not be too prolonged, revolting, or disgusting."

Sardou was not the first to treat Tabarin dramatically. There was also a comic opera in two acts, with libretto by Alboize and André and music by Georges Bousquet, played at the Théâtre-Lyrique in December, 1852, which represented poor Tabarin as being exploited by a greedy impresario

named Mondor. And again on June 13, 1874, a two-act play in verse by Paul Ferrier, "Tabarin," was played at the Théâtre-Français. Thanks to the splendid interpretation given by Coquelin the Elder, the piece was very successful, but it does not depict the historical Tabarin. The hero of this piece is rather represented as a comedian who, while himself a prey to personal sorrow, has to assume a joyous countenance to amuse the public. Though he secured the collaboration of M. Ferrier for the new lyrical comedy, Sardou did not present the same version of the old comedian's life and character, but based his book on a prefatory note by Georges d'Harmonville, printed in his edition of the works of Tabarin.

"Les Barbares," produced at the Paris Opera House on October 23, 1901, is a lyrical tragedy in three short acts written by Sardou and C. B. Gheusi in collaboration. The music is by that master of melody, Camille Saint-Saëns. But in spite of the distinguished names of both librettist and composer, the work is not one of those masterpieces which assume a permanent place in the popular affections. Saint-Saëns's music was too ecclesiastical for the stage—too reminiscent, as one of the critics remarked, of the organ of the Madeleine. In libretto, too, Sardou was not at his best. Possibly the task was not quite congenial to a dramatist of his type. The critics have noticed in the book of "Les Barbares" a freedom of treatment which is quite unusual in so punctilious a stickler for historical accuracy. The leader of the Germanic invaders at Orange in 105 B.C. was Boiorix, not Marcomir. The names of the Roman consuls are changed, and there were certainly no vestal virgins and no theatre at Arausio till three hundred years afterward. But, after all, such discrepancies between fact and romance do not really affect the artistic merit of the work, for they destroy no illusions. The majority of playgoers have long since forgotten the Roman history they

learned at school. Had he been writing a play, Sardou would no doubt have developed the contrast between the ferocity of Marcomir's warriors and the disciplined valour of the Roman legionaries. An opera in which a bare forty pages of text in verse is divided into three short acts scarcely affords room for character drawing and development of situations. The suddenness of the change from the Vestal Floria—one moment resisting the advances of Marcomir, and the next falling in love with him and throwing herself into his arms—is all of a piece with the narrowness of the stage. As we have seen in the case of "La Papillonne," Sardou is by no means at his best in small pieces with few characters and simple plot.

A second play written expressly for the English stage by Sardou—this time in collaboration with Emile Moreau—was "Dante," performed at Drury Lane Theatre on April 30, 1903. As in the case of "Robespierre," the English version was prepared by Laurence Irving. The piece had a run for seven weeks, the chief interpreters being Sir Henry Irving in the title-rôle, and Miss Lena Ashwell in the double part of Pia dei Tolomei and Gemma, the poet's daughter. "Dante" is not intended to give a view of the Dante of history; that is to say, it is not concerned with the external vicissitudes of the poet's life. To quote Sardou's own words: "There is more of the soul than of the body of Dante in our drama. We have personified in him a lover of liberty, a fierce hater of persecution, of oppression, and of clerical domination. Our Dante is not the historical Dante; it is the moral Dante. We have taken him in his full grandeur as a symbol of liberty. It was this conception of the hero that we offered to Henry Irving." The poet was born in the year 1265, and with the more famous period of his love for Beatrice, which ended with her death in 1290, the drama has no concern.

"Dante" achieved success at Drury Lane, but it was

rather a triumph of the popular favourites, Sir Henry Irving and Miss Lena Ashwell, than of the playwright. The *mise-en-scène* by the two French scenic artists, Rousin and Bertin, was superb, but the play itself is rather intricate and confusing to follow. The personages are historical, but the situations in which they are thrown are imaginary. For example, Dante and Pia dei Tolomei were never on terms of speaking intimacy, and Dante enthusiasts will be inclined to resent the dramatist's making Gemma a natural daughter of the poet and Pia. In fact, this amour is pure invention, unless Sardou and Moreau were willing to base their justification on the identity of a certain mysterious "donna gentile" in the poem whom many Dante scholars suppose to be the Gemma Donati whom he subsequently married. It is difficult to draw the line between liberty and license in such matters, but the critic was probably a sound judge who expressed his regret that instead of adhering closely to Dante, or writing a brand-new drama and labelling it Dante, Sardou had blended the two methods.

"La Sorcière," produced at the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt on December 15, 1903, again exemplifies the author's interest in the occult sciences which formed the groundwork of "Spiritisme." This time the element of mystery is the hypnotic power possessed by the heroine Zoraya. The play was written for Sarah Bernhardt, who surpassed herself in the rôle of the heroine, as even those critics acknowledged who condemned the work as a whole. Some of the critics professed to find in the play evidence that Sardou was worn out and past work. A curious comment on this judgment is afforded by the fact that the piece had actually been prepared about twelve years earlier. According to his custom, the dramatist had worked out the play in the rough, and shown it to Madame Bernhardt, who pronounced it "superb." But she had just taken the Renaissance Theatre, the stage of which was not large enough to do justice to the piece, and in its place Sardou wrote for her "Gis-



SARDOU AT THREE SCORE AND TEN



monda," which was played late in 1894. "La Sorcière" added one more to the long list of successes of Sardou and his chief interpreter, and Madame Bernhardt found the rôle of Zoraya so congenial that she adopted it as part of her permanent repertoire. We have seen what stress Sardou laid upon rehearsals, and how assiduously he attended them, and how rarely he could be induced to witness the first public performance of any of his plays. But on this occasion he yielded to the pressing invitation of his friend Sarah, as he habitually called her. No sooner had the curtain fallen on this triumph of his old age than the scene where was to have taken place the death by fire of the Sorceress was hastily cleared away, and Mme. Bernhardt entertained the author and his friends at a supper on the stage. Standing beside Mme. Réjane, her great rival and interpreter of Madame Sans-Gêne, she raised her glass and gave a toast: "Sardou at his best, my dear master."

Mrs. Patrick Campbell played an English version of the piece during a successful tour in America, which was unfortunately cut short early in 1905 by a carriage accident.

"La Piste," Sardou's fifty-fifth piece, was produced at the Théâtre des Variétés on February 16, 1906. Like one of his earlier successes, the plot revolves around a stolen letter. It is nearly as clever in composition as "Les Pattes de Mouche," but inferior in character drawing. In "La Piste" an incriminating love-letter, hidden in a lady's writing-desk, is found by her husband. In her despair she declares that it was written when she was married to another man; but for proof of this she is forced to rely on the testimony of her former husband. An English version under the title "The Love Letter," adapted by Ferdinand Gottschalk, was played at the Lyric Theatre, New York, in October, 1906. In Paris, the leading rôles were taken by Mme. Réjane and M. Brasseur; in New York by William Courtenay and Miss Virginia Harned. In Paris the play was much more successful than in New York.

"L'Affaire des Poisons," Sardou's last play, was produced December 7, 1907, at the Porte Saint-Martin. It is an historical drama in a prologue and five acts. Its action takes place at the court of Louis XIV., and the heroine is Mme. de Montespan. The principal rôle, the Abbé Grifard, was played by M. Coquelin, for whom the rôle was written. The reign of the Roi Soleil was a period of poisoning—the school of Brinvilliers still existed, and Mme. Voisin and her acolytes openly vended "succession powders." The ignorant physicians of the day ascribed all their unsuccessful cases to poisoning. This period fascinated Sardou as long ago as 1869, when he began accumulating material in his voluminous *dossiers* for a play of this curious time—a mimic scene wherein poisons should be dealt in freely by great ladies, courtiers, fortune-tellers, and unfrocked priests. Among the notable pictures of the play was the salon of the philter-vendor, Mme. Voisin, to which comes Mme. de Montespan, masked; as is very natural—on the stage—she is followed thither by all the other characters.

Another striking picture was the Grotto of Thetis at Versailles, said to be the most elaborate scene ever placed on the Paris stage; this single setting cost over 35,000 francs. The stage grotto was a reconstitution of the actual grotto, and was a marvellous imitation of its shell-work, its coral, its nacre, its mother-of-pearl, its fountains, its pillars of pink sea-shells, and its statuettes of tritons and naiads. Another effective picture was a reproduction of the salon of Louis XIV. The most novel effect in the play was the "Black Mass." This perverted ceremonial is for the purpose of invoking evil to a specified person, and is performed with black candles instead of white, and with reversed vestments. The devil in person, as all devout people know, frequently attends a successful "black mass," and will with his ardent thumb imprint a black brand on the white shoulder of some lady who pleases him.

Even if this play had not been successful, it would have been extraordinary that a septuagenarian should have written so ingenious a piece of work. For it was a marvel of technique, and its curtains fell on pictures which invariably piqued or startled the large audiences. But it was successful, not only as a piece of stage work, but financially as well, for it drew large houses during the entire season at the Porte Saint-Martin.

A curious fact about the production was that Sardou repeated his course concerning "La Tosca." In 1887, when that play was first produced, he sued the journal *Gil Blas* for printing a four-column summary of the plot on the day before the production. Just twenty years later he sued *Le Matin* for a similar action with "L'Affaire des Poisons." In both suits he recovered damages.

It was not long after the striking success of his last play that the end of his long life came. In August, 1908, Sardou was spending the summer as usual on his estate at Marly. Mme. Sardou was with him, and his youngest son André. His two other sons, Pierre and Jean, were absent, as was his only daughter, Mme. Robert de Flers.

Sardou had gone to Paris on some business, returning thence suffering from a fever which resolved itself into a pulmonary congestion. The doctors grew alarmed, and his children were summoned at once. But in a few days he grew better, and actually had his books and papers brought from his work-room into his bedroom. The habit of work was upon him. He improved steadily, and for a time it seemed as if he were again in his accustomed health.

But as October approached he was again forced to take to his bed. He failed steadily, but persisted in reading the current journals, until, growing weaker, he had them read to him. As he continued to decline he was seized with a strong desire to return to Paris. His family tried to dissuade him, but he would not listen, and they were forced

to humor him. In a motor-car he was carefully taken back to his native city, and his joy was touching as he passed through the Bois de Boulogne. He seemed to feel as if he were again at home.

When he reached his Paris house he found that his bed had been placed in his workroom, and again he was delighted. On his writing table lay the books and papers on which he had been last engaged when he left Paris. He grew animated, and began to lay plans for new plays. The news of the great success of his latest piece, "*L'Affaire des Poisons*," filled him with pleasure. He even began to read the daily journals.

But the improvement was only the flicker of an expiring lamp. Soon he grew weak again, became unconscious, and passed away without pain on November 8, 1908, in his seventy-eighth year.

At the request of his widow a sketch was taken of him on his death-bed, wearing the velvet cap so well known to his friends. The artist was Levy-Dhurmer, and he did his work in pastels. Oddly enough, this is the only painting of Sardou in existence. There are many daguerreotypes and photographs, but he was of too restless a temperament to sit for a painter.

His funeral took place November 11th, at the Paris Church of St. François-de-Sales. As in 1906 Sardou was promoted from the rank of Chevalier to that of Grand Cordon of the Legion of Honor, his remains were accorded a military burial, with a general officer in command of the troops. The French government was represented by the Minister of Public Instruction; the French Academy by Albert Vandal, and the society of Dramatic Authors (of which Sardou was president) by Paul Hervieu. All three of these officials pronounced funeral discourses at the house after the religious ceremony, and the body was then transported to Marly to rest in the family tomb.

CHAPTER XIV

WAYS OF LIVING AND METHODS OF WORK

THE long career, the remarkable versatility, and the large amount of work done by Sardou naturally arouse curiosity as to his habits of living and methods of work. He was most methodical. When in Paris he rose early, and between half-past seven and eight was at his desk, where he remained at work for a couple of hours. Like many French men of letters, he wore easy garments when at work: Dumas the Younger wore pajamas while at his desk; Sardou attired himself in a loose woollen suit, slippers, and a velvet cap. After his two hours of work he shaved and dressed, receiving visitors from 9 to 11. These callers included theatrical managers, actors in quest of plays, potential collaborators, and venders of bric-a-brac. The latter visitors were numerous, for Sardou was an ardent collector of old prints, old books, tapestries, carvings, coins, jewels, weapons, and bibelots of all kinds. At mid-day he took luncheon with his family, sometimes a few intimate friends being invited. At two o'clock he went forth to his multifarious engagements, such as attendance at rehearsals, sittings at the French Academy, meetings of the Society of Dramatic Authors, and the like. At five o'clock he returned, and carefully noted down the impressions that had occurred to him during the day. He was in the habit of dining early with his family. He rarely attended the theatre in the evening, and he was usually in bed by ten o'clock.

His day's work at Paris did not include writing. He preferred while there to do only preliminary work, as he did not find the environment of Paris favourable to composition. Making and classifying notes was his principal desk-

work at Paris, while the actual writing he did at his country place at Marly. The winter at Paris was largely devoted to rehearsals, and the many details which precede the first presentation of a play. At Paris, Sardou was more a business man than a writer; at Marly he plunged himself into his literary work. At Paris, he was always to be found by friends in his study at five or six o'clock. His Paris work-room was a modest one; his fine library, his prints and autographs, and his large collection of curios were at Marly. At Paris, he had only a working library.

When at Marly Sardou rose at seven, took a cup of chocolate, and worked from eight to ten; this was preliminary work, arranging notes and laying out his scenes. At ten o'clock his letters were opened and answered. At eleven he went out, strolled through the gardens, examined his flowers and plants, and chatted with his gardener. Between eleven and twelve he would take a substantial meal, accompanied with wine and finishing with black coffee. Immediately after taking his coffee he began to write, and worked until two or half-past two o'clock, when he laid aside his pen. He devoted the rest of the day to the busy idleness of the country gentleman. At one time he was Mayor of Marly, and gave up a certain portion of his afternoons to the cares of municipal government. He rarely went to Paris during the summer, and seldom left Marly except to attend the rehearsals of one of his new plays. Rehearsals he considered almost as important as composition. It is related by M. De Najac, one of Sardou's collaborators, that he spent a fortnight with Sardou at Marly in 1880, while they were concocting "Divorçons." As is usually the case in dramatic collaborations, most of the time was spent in discussion. The plot was evolved as they strolled through the grounds, hung over poultry-yards, or sat on fences. De Najac used afterward to relate

how Sardou would assume by turns all the characters in the play, to the astonishment of passing rustics.

More than once, in his letters and pamphlets, Sardou has described his methods of work. Whenever an idea occurred to him, he immediately made a memorandum of it. These notes he classified and filed. For example, years before the production of "Thermidor" he had the thought of one day writing such a play. Gradually the character of Fabienne shaped itself; Labussière was devised later to fit Coquelin. Everything that he read about that epoch of the French Revolution, and the ideas which this reading inspired, he wrote down in the form of rough notes. Engravings, maps, prints, and other documents of the time he carefully collected. Memoirs and histories he annotated and indexed, filing away the index references in his file-cases, or dossiers. At the time of his death, Sardou had many hundreds of these dossiers, old and new. Some of the older ones had been worked up into plays, while the newer ones were merely raw material for future dramas. When the idea of a play had measurably shaped itself in his mind he wrote out a skeleton plot, which he placed in its dossier. There it might lie indefinitely. In this shape "Thermidor" remained for nearly twenty years, and "Théodora" for ten. When he considered that the time was ripe for one of his embryonic plays, Sardou would take out that particular dossier, read over the material, and lay it aside again. After it had fermented in his brain for a time, he would, if the inspiration seized him, write out a scenario. After this he began the actual writing of the play.

He never followed the chronological order, but wrote his most important scene first. In "Thermidor" it was the scene in which Fabienne is condemned to death. In "Dora" it was the famous scene between the three men. In his plays, generally speaking, the great scene is in the next to

the last act. When he had thus roughly put his play together, he once more carefully examined all the notes, maps, engravings, and other documents in the dossier, made any additions which suggested themselves, and then copied out his draft on large sheets of paper with plenty of margin. While copying, many ideas occurred to him, which he added to the draft. When it was finished he would lay it aside for some weeks, after which he would again read it, making further corrections. Thrice this process was repeated, and at last the margin had disappeared under the numerous corrections and interlineations. Then he turned it over to the copyist, by whom the succeeding drafts were made.

The play had now assumed form; it remained to be shaped and polished. The importance that Sardou attached to the spoken word is shown by his brilliant dialogue. After he had finished the fourth draft of a play he often rewrote the dialogue three or four times. As each of these new drafts was copied it was bound and put aside. The earlier drafts looked like what printers call "foul proof," with myriads of minute interlineations written in a microscopic hand. At last the copy ceased to be loaded with corrections, and approximated to what printers call "clean copy." Even then he would frequently refer to the earlier drafts, and restore versions of the dialogue which he had discarded.

When he worked in collaboration, his collaborator usually submitted the plan of the play to Sardou. It was discussed, and changes suggested, until the scenario was to Sardou's satisfaction. Then the writing was usually done by his collaborator; when it was finished the whole play was laid before Sardou. The elder dramatist then fell to work, and often entirely rewrote the work of his younger confrère.

Sardou was often reproached by the French critics for mingling comedy and drama in one play. The first two acts

of his plays are often humorous, the others dramatic. "Though frequently told that this is wrong," he wrote, "I believe it is right. During the first two acts I make the characters as amusing as I consistently can, but not after the action has really begun. The audience is then well disposed from the outset, and wishes to have its emotions played upon a little before the curtain falls. If I succeeded in making them cry from beginning to end, they would say they were not at the Ambigu; if I succeeded in making them laugh all the time, they would say the piece was a flimsy farce."

In the preface to "La Haine," Sardou has told how his plays revealed themselves to him: "The problem is invariable. It appears as a kind of equation from which the unknown quantity must be found. The problem gives me no peace till I have found the answer. In 'La Haine' the problem was: under what circumstances will the profound charity of woman show itself in the most striking manner? The formula once found, the piece came by itself."

Sardou worked in every division of the playwriting craft. He wrote rhymed vaudevilles, such as "M. Garat" and "Les Près St. Gervais"; farcical comedies with intricate plots, of which the "Pattes de Mouche" is a type; dramatic comedies, such as "Nos Intimes," "Maison Neuve," "Séraphine"; satirical comedies, including "La Famille Benoiton," "Rabagas," "Nos Bons Villageois"; historical tragedies, among them "Patrie," "La Haine," "Thermidor"; historical comedies, of which "Mme. Sans-Gêne" is the type; operettas like "Les Merveilleuses"; juridical dramas, such as "Ferréol"; spectacular extravaganzas like "Le Crocodile" and "Le Roi Carotte"; broad farces like "Divorçons"; blood-curdling melodramas like "Les Diable Noirs" and "La Tosca"; colossal historical spectacles like "Théodora," "Gismonda," and "Cléopâtre."

His versatility is shown by the assertion of a Paris stage manager that for a Sardou night a play could be taken from his writings suited to every stage in Paris, from the most dignified to the most merry, from the Opéra to the Palais-Royal, from the Comédie-Française to the Variétés. A critic remarked that during nearly sixty years of productivity, from 1851 to 1908, Sardou's genius adapted itself to the taste of the time. His early comedies—"Les Pattes de Mouche," "Nos Intimes," "Les Ganaches"—were woven with that maze of plot and sub-plot which was demanded by audiences of a period when Balzac's methods were in vogue. After half a century had passed, his later comedies, such as "Marcelle" and "La Piste," were simple and clear, the action being all in the hands of two or three characters; this was the type of play demanded by Paris audiences of the present epoch. Between these two extremes such plays as "Dora," "Daniel Rochat," and "Rabagas" typified the changing tastes of audiences, and mirrored faithfully the periods in which they were produced.

Although Sardou was a marvel of industry as a playwright, his busy mind sought occupation in many other ways. He laid out gardens; he planted trees; he designed and erected buildings; he collected books, prints, paintings, bronzes, bibelots of all kinds. He was an archæologist; he was an expert in Byzantine antiquities; he was an authority on the French Revolution; he was a Napoleonist of profound knowledge. And yet, with all his occupations, he found time to rub elbows with the world, and was famous in Paris as a story-teller and as a mime.

In France, the people of the stage number a playwright's works by his acts rather than his plays, as in that country there are so many one-act pieces produced. Reckoned in this way, Sardou's work totals over two hundred and fifty acts. The number of characters figuring in his many pieces amounts to over eleven hundred.

Concerning these characters, another playwright, De Caillavet, says that Sardou himself almost believed in their existence, they were so real. When mention was made of his historical characters, such as Robespierre or Théodora, he always spoke as if he had actually seen them. "And," comments Caillavet, "he was right, for Rabagas is more real than the politicians of to-day, and Mme. Sans-Gêne is more real than was the genuine Duchess of Dantzic."

Sardou was always what is called a chilly mortal; he was perpetually complaining of cold, and even in his overheated rooms he often wore a velvet cap and a muffler round his throat, and invariably ensconced himself near the fire. There he loved to talk, and his friends loved to hear him. To quote the description given by his friend Adolphe Brisson, "No one knows more things and no one knows them better than Sardou. His memory is a museum wherein all the objects are labelled, numbered, classified, and arranged methodically, and as he passes from one to another of these objects, he describes them and relates their history. Each represents to him some souvenir, which in turn evokes another. From this there results an uninterrupted chain of anecdotes, of word-pictures, of picturesque sayings. With him conversation never flags. He throws into his conversation all his inward fire, the movements of his body, the boyish impulsiveness of his gestures, the sparkle of his eyes, which are at once *mali-cieux*, imperious, and crafty. They have the look of the man of action and of the diplomatic prelate; as it were, Voltaire and Mazarin rolled into one. It is delightful to listen to him." He loved to talk at table. He was very hospitable, but never allowed his table to be overcrowded, and preferred that people should not "drop in" unexpectedly to dinner.

In person, Sardou was of medium height and spare build. His face in age was often compared to that of Vol-

taire, in youth to that of Bonaparte, when the future Emperor was still pale and lean. Sardou had a pallid complexion, a long nose, sharp chin, irregular features, and clear, keen, gray eyes, while his thin meaningful lips were often curled into a shrewd smile.

He was a genial host and a delightful talker. He was famous even in France for his brilliant conversation. Your fluent talker is not always gifted with a clear enunciation, but Sardou was most distinct, wrote Edmondo De Amicis. Indistinctness is a crime on the stage, and Sardou was a severe critic of the rapid and indistinct enunciation of French actors; he often insisted at his rehearsals that they should speak their lines so the audience could hear and understand them. Even Sarah Bernhardt, he once said, was a flagrant offender in this respect. In Paris, he added, she was more careful, but elsewhere she was often utterly unintelligible. "I have heard," he once remarked, "that in foreign countries she frequently gallops through her parts, so that even Frenchmen cannot understand her. I often wonder if foreigners think they do."

Countless anecdotes are told of Sardou's peculiarities at rehearsals. Some paint him as good-humored and kindly, others as bitter and satirical. Probably he was both at different times. Before a piece was put in rehearsal Sardou always read it himself to the assembled actors. He was a wonderful reader, and in this respect was probably excelled by no other playwright, unless it was Ernest Legouvé. As Sardou read he identified himself with each character, laughed and cried by turns, sprang up and carried out in pantomime the spoken word—in brief, he acted the various rôles. When the lines were finally committed to memory by the players and all was ready for the rehearsal, Sardou would take his place on the stage and follow the action with the keenest attention. He interrupted continually, running from side to side, at times taking the words out of the

actor's mouth, and showing him how they should be uttered. Once when "Les Merveilleuses" was in rehearsal a gavotte was to be danced under the direction of a ballet-master. Sardou was not satisfied with the performance, and after a dozen times he was still disappointed. At last the ballet-master flew into a rage, clapped on his hat, and told Sardou to lead his ballet himself. The playwright accepted the challenge, placed himself at the head of the giggling ballet girls, and deftly led them through the mazes of the measure.

P. V. Gheuzi, who subsequently collaborated with Sardou in "Les Barbares," gives us a glimpse of the rehearsal of "Théodora" at the Porte Saint-Martin in 1884. Of all Sardou's plays this was the one on which he lavished the most elaborate *mise-en-scène* and the greatest wealth of archæological learning. "It was three o'clock in the morning," says M. Gheuzi, "and we were still waiting for the last piece of M. Amable's scenery to be fixed in position. The photographers were lying fast asleep in the auditorium, worn out by their wait of eight hours. But the author of 'Théodora' did not display the slightest trace of fatigue; in spite of a sharp attack of influenza, he went to and fro, mounted the steps in front, discussed details, gave orders, supervised everything, and answered all manner of questions, once more offering to his friends the spectacle of that prodigious activity which knows but one rival in the world, that of the great and indefatigable artiste, Bernhardt, whose guests we were."

Like Alexandre Dumas père, Sardou was extremely sensitive to the opinions of the less subtle spectators of his rehearsals. He closely watched and heeded the impressions and comments of the stage carpenters, scene-painters, firemen, supers, and other humble people behind the scenes. They represented to him the average mind of the average audience. To the opinions of actors of his unproduced pieces, he paid little heed; to the opinions of

critics, none at all. At rehearsals no details escaped him. He would seat himself on the stage chairs and sofas, open and shut the practicable doors, go to the back of the parterre to study the perspective of the scene, climb to the highest gallery to see if the audience there could hear, and then hasten back to the stage. There he would seat himself, jumping up during a rehearsal thirty or forty times to show the actors his idea of the action. In doing this he would laugh, would cry, would shriek, and would even die a mimic death. Coming to life again, he would call for his overcoat and hasten to muffle himself up as before. He was very sensitive to cold, and always came on the stage with a heavy coat, a muffler, and a cap to protect him from draughts. He would rehearse from ten in the morning until three, when he would take a sandwich and a glass of wine. After this he would resume his work until five, at which hour he would go blithely forth into the street, smiling and humming, "followed," as one resentful player put it, "by scowling actors and weeping actresses."

When "Thermidor" was first in rehearsal at the Porte St. Martin, it is related that Sardou was in despair over the apathetic attitude of the mob. Dreadful deeds were done before them, yet they contemplated these bloody doings with impassive faces and lacklustre eyes. "For the love of heaven!" shrieked Sardou, tearing his hair, "show some signs of life! Can't you move yourselves, you—you—*espèces d'andouilles!*" Here Coquelin intervened: "Dear Master," he said soothingly, "they'll all do anything you ask them to do, but please don't get angry." "Angry!" replied Sardou in great surprise, "why, I'm not angry; I only called them *andouilles*."

The phrase applied by the dramatist to his impavid mob means a kind of sausage made of tripe and pork. The *andouille* appeals to the French mind as comic, for it enters into many sayings, thus "to attempt to break an *andouille* across one's knee" typifies a hopeless task; *vetu* or *ficelé*

comme une andouille is applied to foppish obesity—to fat popinjays, tightly girt, yet lethargic; to plump ladies spilling out of their frocks, yet semi-comatose. The *andouille* analogy is apparent.

From his law-suits over the premature reporting of "La Tosca" and "L'Affaire des Poisons," it may be easily imagined that Sardou had a strong objection to the presence of journalists at the rehearsals of his plays. He always opposed the admission of outsiders on these occasions, on the ground that their gossip would disclose to the public the surprises of the play, thereby depriving it of all its freshness on the first night. Charges of insincerity in this matter were often brought against him, but the lapse of time has brought other playwrights to share his belief. To such an extent did this feeling pervade the ranks of dramatic authors, that in 1902 a meeting was held by the directors of all the Paris theatres and the directors of the Society of Dramatic Authors and Musical Composers, at which it was resolved that thereafter at dress rehearsals, dramatic critics, newspaper reporters, and all other outsiders should be rigidly excluded. The only exception to this rule was to be the issuance of twenty-four tickets, twelve to the playwright for his family and trusted friends, and twelve to the manager of the theatre for his family and for costumers, and other persons connected with the theatre. The resolution further directed that the manager or playwright violating this rule should be mulcted in the sum of 3000 francs, to be devoted to the charitable fund of the Society of Dramatic Authors. It is perhaps needless to remark that this rule has since been laid away in lavender.

While this measure excited not a little talk in Paris, it was generally agreed by theatrical people that it was more than warranted. It was said that dress rehearsals had entirely lost the intimate character of former days, when the auditorium contained only playwrights, actors, and people connected with the stage. In these latter days dress

rehearsals had come to be frequented by café loungers, rich idlers, and men of the world, who considered it "the thing" to be seen at these exclusive gatherings. Playwrights, managers, and actors were constantly importuned for tickets of admission. This in itself was sufficiently annoying, but what was most resented by playwrights and actors was the fact that the attendants at these rehearsals were often the most pitiless critics of the plays. These were the men who organized the first-night cabals, it was they who were mainly instrumental in creating that atmosphere of sneering which has ruined so many plays on their first performance.

Very early in his career Sardou devoted much time to rehearsing his plays, and was always one of the most earnest advocates of the exclusion of journalists and idlers from rehearsals. Even when comparatively unknown he disliked to let the public know beforehand the striking features of a new play, and in later years he always maintained that through the presence of reporters on these occasions his plays had already ceased to be novelties when the curtain rose on the first performance. As early as 1866, when "Maison Neuve" was in rehearsal at the Vaudeville Theatre, an enterprising reporter printed a minute analysis of the play before it was produced. This so irritated the playwright that he refused to permit the piece to be performed, and determined to withdraw it. But the manager of the theatre, with whom he had signed a contract, brought an action to enforce his rights, and Sardou was compelled to give way. The result was an excellent advertisement for the play, and the wits of Paris declared that it was a pre-arranged trick between Sardou and the journalist. Sardou's friends insisted he was sincere.

Sardou never really succeeded in his desire to exclude outsiders from rehearsals, but he paid no attention to the opinion of the privileged loungers present, and not very much to the verdict of a first-night audience. He main-

tained that the Paris première is not a representative audience, because made up of critics, reporters, claqueurs, and blasé men of the world. An unfavorable verdict by such an audience did not, as a rule, disconcert him. In fact, some of his pieces, after a frigid reception on the first night, were greeted warmly on the second performance, and subsequently enjoyed long runs.

Concerning Sardou's indifference to the opinion of first-night audiences Albert Wolff once wrote that "in Paris, after the first-night audience, there comes another of a lower grade of intelligence, but the inferior grade comes two hundred times where the other comes once." And M. Wolff went on to say that "some of the plays of Sardou only half please the cultured few. But this select class of play-goers is small. In all Paris they are barely numerous enough to fill an auditorium for a single night. These fastidious critics often make a great to-do over some new play which like a rose dies in a day, and they often depart in discontent from a theatre which on the next night is crowded, and remains crowded for the next six months with the uncultured many." When Sardou brought out "*La Famille Benoiton*," the "tout Paris" on its first-night received it with icy coldness, and Sardou's friends feared for its future. But the playwright did not waver. He said that the piece was good and that it would go. His judgment was confirmed, for the play ran over two hundred nights when first put on, and has been frequently revived.

If Sardou was a faithful attendant at rehearsals, the same could not be said of the subsequent performances. He never made it a habit to appear at the theatre, even on first-nights. In fact, so nervous was his temperament that he could not remain in the theatre at all, even behind the scenes. On these occasions he usually took up his station at some place in the vicinity of the theatre, and from time to time light-footed friends would bring him news of the reception of the play.

It is much more difficult for a novice to secure an opening for a play in Paris than for a novel. A publisher can issue the ordinary paper-bound romance at a small cost, while even without elaborate setting and scenery a play demands many thousands of francs for its production. But if the path of the playwright is strewn with difficulties his reward is great. The Society of Dramatic Authors controls the production of plays in Paris and in the provinces, and exacts from managers a rigid compliance with its rules. If a manager refuses to fall into line, he is practically prohibited from producing any of the plays under its control, which means that he can produce no new plays at all. It exacts from a manager in Paris between ten and twelve per cent. of the gross receipts of a play. This averages about 5000 francs a night, so that the author's share of the profits at ten per cent. amounts to about 500 francs per night. The fees collected from the provincial theatres are a trifle lower. A successful playwright frequently receives percentages from theatres all over France simultaneously, in addition to a small royalty on the sale of his play in book form. For the one-act farces so common in Paris, the author usually receives two per cent. of the gross receipts, ten per cent. going to the author of the principal play. Sardou speedily saw that it was more profitable to write plays occupying the entire evening. As a result, therefore, not only of his talent as a playwright, but also of his tact as a business man, he often received from his plays over 250,000 francs a year. For a single play he frequently received in the first year 150,000 francs. His more successful plays, such as "La Tosca" and "Mme. Sans-Gêne," netted him over half a million francs apiece.

The fact that the playwrights of France have thriven to such a degree is largely due to their elaborate organization. Not only the dramatic authors but also the composers of music are organized into a society whose directors safeguard their legal rights, take them to the courts if neces-

sary, and look after their financial interests. The affairs of the society are managed by a committee of fifteen, two of whom are elected president and secretary. Of this body Sardou was president at the time of his death, and had been for some years. He directed its activities with sagacity and success. If Sardou had not been a talented playwright he could have been a successful man of business. His accounts were kept with exactness, and the files of his documents were arranged with method. He kept all business letters; even the rough drafts of his contracts were put away with the utmost care. If a dispute arose, he was never at a loss, for his documents were at hand.

At one period it was the fashion in Paris to shout "plagiarism" the day after each new success by Sardou. Elsewhere these charges are discussed specifically in connection with the plays accused. Generally, it may be added that in the history of the stage there is no case on record of an author being accused of plagiarism the day after a failure. It is only successful plays which bring forth these accusations. And there is no stage play which does not bear a certain resemblance to some other stage play. There are few melodramas in which the author does not reward virtue ere the curtain falls, and unite the leading lady and the hero who have loved each other madly ever since the first act. All the plays in existence are based upon a baker's dozen of situations. The late D'Oyly Carte, the well-known theatrical manager, once wrote: "The subjects available for plays are necessarily limited, and we have a well-known set of 'motives' which occur over and over again. . . . It is inevitable that playwrights should constantly be making use of the same motives and effects with varieties of scenes and characters." And as Dean Swift characteristically remarked: "If I light my candle from another that does not affect my property in the wick and tallow."

CHAPTER XV

THE FRENCH CRITICS ON SARDOU

ALL his life Sardou was at feud with the critical fraternity. It is not uncommon for playwrights to have a poor opinion of critics. Even those writers whose plays have won fame and riches believe that the critics underrate their work. Mr. Pinero once, when asked to define a comedy, acidly remarked: "A comedy is a farce by a deceased playwright." Correspondingly, many critics have persisted in classing Sardou's most successful comedies as farces. They have also scarified him for, as they maintained, putting farce, comedy, melodrama, and tragedy all in a single play.

Sardou did not content himself with epigrams, as does Pinero. He was a pugnacious playwright, and ever ready for battle. His polemics with critics would make a volume. Often these controversies became so bitter that they reached the verge of the duello. His feud with Francisque Sarcey never became quite so envenomed, but it was long as well as deep, for it ended only with their lives.

Sarcey's long-continued criticism of Sardou may make it apropos to mention that the present writer recently re-read Sarcey's collected criticisms. Edited by his son-in-law, Adolph Brisson, they have been appearing in book form, and now make some eight volumes under the title "*Quarante Ans de Théâtre.*" Years of reading criticisms on Sardou in newspapers, French, English, and American, had left an impression on the writer's mind that the leading critics were unfavorable to him. This impression is not correct concerning the French critics, as will be found on reading the criticisms of the most notable of these writers. The late Francisque Sarcey was the dean of French

dramatic critics, and the most popular, if not the most polished among them; Jules Lemaitre is probably the most brilliant critic, and Emile Faguet certainly the most philosophical. All three of these critics, while in special instances they often criticised Sardou unfavorably, spoke highly of his talent in their general criticisms of his work. A similar discovery resulted from an inspection of the writings of lesser known French critics—for most of the Paris critics now collect their work for book publication. Among these may be mentioned Auguste Vitu, René Doumic, Gustave Larroumet, Adolph Brisson, Albert Wolff, Louis Lacour, B. J. E. Montégut, J. Ernest-Charles, Emmanuel Arène, and others.

In his day the dean of French critics, Francisque Sarcey was originally a professor at the Lycée Charlemagne; in 1859 he became a dramatic critic, which calling he followed for forty years until his death, in 1899. During much of this time he was critic of *Le Temps*, and lectured as well as wrote on the drama. Personally, he was extremely popular with the Parisians, who called him "Uncle Sarcey." He was without doubt the most influential critic in France. Sarcey was the author of something less than a score of works, the most important of which is his "Quarante Ans de Théâtre." In these eight volumes may be found criticisms on Sardou covering thirty-nine years. Many of these are unfavorable, and Sardou resented them. But an examination of Sarcey's collected criticisms shows that his general estimate of Sardou's ability was high. For example, writing as long ago as 1860 of "Les Pattes de Mouches" Sarcey said:

"This comedy reveals in him who has wrought it much talent and the promise of a brilliant future. M. Sardou will in some years be one of the masters of the stage. . . . His dialogue is clever, incisive, and brilliant. It is full of images. It has a distinct charm. . . . This play is the first step made by a young man who cannot fail to climb high in the future."

In 1865, discussing "La Famille Benoiton," Sarcey wrote:

"Sardou understands his trade. In the fourth act he has placed a great scene—one of the finest we have on the stage—pathetic, admirable. At its close came the playwright's triumph—the audience broke into furious applause. The success was complete, although the last act is bad. But why dwell on the defects? There are many defects in Sardou's works, but he is nevertheless an artist of the first order. You feel that you are in the presence of a master, young, daring, original. . . . I wish that Sardou were faultless. I would like to see him add to his marvellous stage skill a profounder quality of observation. But with all his faults he possesses many and surpassing excellences."

Of "Patrie," writing in 1869, Sarcey said:

"'Patrie' is one of the most marked successes Sardou has ever had, and the play well deserves success. It is full of remarkable scenes. The effects were obtained by simple means. The sentiments expressed are lofty, the style is simple, the language is sober and vigorous. The play was received by the audience with an explosion of enthusiasm."

B. J. E. Montégut was for a number of years the official critic of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Although not always praising Sardou's plays, his general estimate of the playwright was high, even years ago, as is shown by an article printed in the *Revue* for March, 1877. It is curious that he should have written with such an air of finality thirty-one years before the playwright's death.

"'Patrie,' wrote M. Montégut, 'contains one of the finest scenes in modern drama—the final scene. Such a creation lifts up the mind to heights not often touched on the stage. It is a powerful and romantic ending. . . . To sum up our impressions of Sardou; our dramatic literature may possess more vigorous talents, but there is no writer with a more perfect knowledge of the stage nor with greater familiarity with the tastes of audiences. When Sardou's career is closed and the generation which follows ours shall wish to study the contemporary drama, it is in his works that it will find the most intelligent and the most vivid microcosm of the times in which he lived.'"

Thirty-two years have passed away since M. Montégut wrote—the time usually allotted to a generation. His forecast of Sardou's status a generation hence is interesting.

Another elder critic of note, Louis Lacour, was an expert in ancient manuscripts. He was attached to one of the great Paris libraries, and was likewise a fruitful writer. Lacour was the author of a monograph entitled "*Trois Théâtres*," in which he discusses and compares the work of Dumas, Augier, and Sardou. The latter playwright he defends from the oft-made charge of mingling comedy and tragedy. "In the real life of the world," says Lacour, "there are few comedies through which there does not run a thread of tragedy." This view does not strike the English-speaking reader as unreasonable, yet such treatment is contrary to the rigid rules of the classic drama, so long held sacred in France. Lacour also defends Sardou for his use of bloody tragedies. "Where," he asks, "would Shakespeare be were such restrictions applied to him? Would they not taboo the poisoning of Hamlet's father, the strangling of Desdemona, the midnight murder of Duncan?" Recapitulating the striking qualities of Sardou, M. Lacour says:

"Sardou is not only a satirical as well as a romantic writer and an artist in words of most extraordinary skill, but he is likewise a keen judge of contemporary vice. In his tragedy there is no over-emphasis and no declamatory lines. His style is eminently dramatic, and one feels in it insensibly a certain rhythm which is all that prose can have and not be verse. If, microscope in hand, one discovers in Sardou's work 'warts and spots,' as Montaigne says, there none the less remain remarkable excellences. If, by the sentiment of justice which is traditional in criticism, one lays aside the inferior part, the critic is seized, gripped, dominated, by the verve and fire of this playwright's work."

Among the younger French critics one of the most prominent is René Doumic. M. Doumic has written much in the line of literary and dramatic criticism for the *Journal*

des Débats, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and the *Revue Bleu*. M. Doumic does not praise Sardou unreservedly, but he most assuredly does not hold him in low esteem.

"The most striking point in Sardou's work," says M. Doumic, "is its variety. He has not confined himself to a single school. Of all the forms of the drama he has believed that the playwright should neglect none. . . . Thanks to his extraordinary adaptability, he has been able to give to the public, at the exact time that they desire it, the particular sort of work for which they are looking. With a rare subtlety of scent he has known how to discover the weaknesses of the hour and to give them scenic form. His types have their date—some of the Second Empire; some of the Third Republic. . . . He is a master in the art of weaving a tangled plot, gradually unravelling it so as to carry curiosity and emotion to their highest pitch. He has an alert mind and a fertile fancy. His dialogue is nervous, agile, keen. . . . But his characters are abstract; they are in reality but puppets, and the action of his plays is highly artificial. . . . Why is it that his creations lack reality? It is due to his prodigious dexterity, which has been his worst enemy."

It will be seen that M. Doumic agrees with the English-speaking critics in his view of this phase of Sardou's work. But in his general estimate he differs from them radically.

"Leaving the weak points of Sardou's work," he says, "in such plays as 'Rabagas' and 'Divorçons' one has the pleasure of praising him without reserve; they are marvels of delicate, ingenious, and finished work. 'Patrie' and 'La Haine' are most successful dramas, and he is beyond the reach of cavil in his skill in perfecting the modern comedy and the historic drama. He is endowed with very rare qualities, and all that he lacks is to have a clearer conception of his art. Still, there is but one voice to give him the most expert among the masters of the stage."

Another of the younger men among French critics was Paul Larroumet, who was untimely taken off in 1903. He was lecturer on French literature at the Sorbonne, and succeeded Sarcey as dramatic critic on the *Temps*, probably the most authoritative French daily. Larroumet at times criticised unfavorably certain of Sardou's plays, but his

general estimate of the playwright was high. When the government promoted Sardou to the grade of commander in the Legion of Honor (later he was promoted to Grand Cordon) Larroumet wrote:

"A reaction has come about in Sardou's favour after a long period of harshness. Critics and theatrical reporters have been hostile to him for various motives. They have reproached him with thinking only of material success; with wasting his fine talents; with making playwriting more of a trade than an art. This treatment has been unjust. Sardou is, to a very high degree, an artist, although his is a practical talent. For that special art that produces illusion, for an adroit and powerful grasp upon the spectator, for the faculty of giving life to imaginary beings, for the power of holding for three hours an audience always attentive and never bored, he has never been equalled. 'Patrie' and 'La Haine' make us think of the great works of the Renaissance. Besides 'Patrie' the dramas of Victor Hugo seem hollow. In 'La Haine' French art penetrated the soul of mediæval Italy. . . . In the least important of Sardou's plays there is more of invention than would be ample to insure the entire career of one of the 'younger school' of playwrights to-day. . . . Thus this man so severely treated by judges whose decisions would be considered absurd if posterity remembered their names—he who has been stigmatized as merely a jester, a chaser after money, a plagiarist, a stage artisan manufacturing for exportation—this man is admitted to-day to have written a number of fine and strong plays. He has painted our times—always agreeably, sometimes with power. Although sneered at for writing only for the present, it will be evident that he has written more than once for posterity."

Jules Lemaitre—academician, journalist, playwright, novelist, lecturer, political orator, and statesman—has in his varied career been one of the most brilliant of French critics. It can by no means be said that he has been indulgent toward Sardou—often M. Lemaitre's readers have roared and the playwright has winced under his mordant pen. But M. Lemaitre is just. In a general estimate of Sardou's work he wrote:

"Sardou's most incontestable qualities are fertility, verve, and imagination. These qualities are only to be justly judged when Sardou's immense repertory is considered in its ensemble, and this perhaps is why no great dramatist has been so ill-treated by the critics. This is why each new work from his pen has met with so many pettifogging objections. But this is why, also, in the face of the thousand petty resistances of detail that we bring to bear against him, we feel that this man is a power, that he is one of the finest dramatic temperaments of the century, that in tragedy he has twice or thrice attained to grandeur and almost to beauty. In summing up his qualities I have only obeyed a scruple of conscience. In the work of such a man one has not the right to discuss some particular error, without recalling the scope of his entire work. Sardou is one of the greatest dramatic authors of his time. 'Patrie' and 'Divorçons' do not fall far short of being masterpieces. No one has the same fertile and inventive mind as Sardou. He has a sense of the historic drama and of high tragedy. No one has either amused or moved us more than he. He is an undisputed master among the workers of the stage, an excellent caricaturist of contemporary manners, a daring poet of a powerful imagination."

A critic who stands at the head in France is Emile Faguet, professor of French poetry at the Lycée Charlemagne. He is a member of the French Academy, and is the author of many books. In 1896 he succeeded Jules Lemaitre as dramatic critic of the *Journal des Débats*, which post he recently resigned to devote himself to literature. M. Faguet does not share the low view of Sardou's work entertained by some critics. Concerning the charge that Sardou mingled melodrama with comedy, M. Faguet wrote:

"In Sardou's more ambitious productions there is an up-to-date comedy mingled with a melodrama. The purists of the 'unity-of-impression' school have been much shocked and scandalized by this peculiarity. Yet this formula had been invented a century ago by a certain M. Beaumarchais. Why should this species of drama be condemned *à priori*? Despite the protestations of some of my colleagues, I cannot understand why such a play is contrary to good sense or why it is disloyal to verity. . . .

There is talent in the realistic plays of the day, but of an entirely different sort from Sardou's. I personally find greater power in a drama founded solely on a conflict of mighty passions. But I am prepared to admit that plays like Sardou's, based only upon a combination of circumstances, may interest us the more because we feel that we might easily be to-morrow playing a part ourselves in such a story."

Reviewing Sardou's career, M. Faguet wrote thus of him:

"He was a writer of an astonishing fertility. In his uninterrupted power of production he rivalled the Spanish dramatists of the classic period. But whatever jealous rivals may say, the quantity of his production did not prevent it from often being of a high quality. He wrote in almost every branch of dramatic literature, and in each he has left works of mark. In addition to his fertility, his skill was prodigious. None better than he knew the mechanism of the stage. As he studied Scribe to learn the craft, and surpassed his master, so the dramatists of the future will be obliged to study Sardou. But they will take from him not the best of his art, but only the mechanical portion which he himself had learned. This man not only possessed skill in construction, emotional power, and wit in dialogue, but philosophical penetration as well. There are those whom this assertion may surprise: I advise them to reread 'Daniel Rochat,' and they will see there set forth a struggle between a religious woman and an atheistic man, who love one another; yet their convictions force them to part, and they fight out their battle with a power and a passion which move the most cynical reader. French audiences will long remember this man, who made them laugh, who made them weep, who even made them think; who depicted France to foreign audiences in her best guise, and who honoured her greatly in more ways than one. His life was a happy one, for while his youth was poverty-stricken his age was glorious, and that is more than a fair division of a human life."

PART SECOND
THE SARDOU PLAYS

THE SARDOU PLAYS

DORA ¹

IN the first act of "Dora" we are at Nice, in March—that is to say, at the end of the season, and at the close of the festival time. Of the cosmopolitan society which is found at Nice, everyone is on the verge of departure. Yet among this swarm of strangers, and more or less authentic aristocracy, the Marquise de Rio-Zarès and her daughter Dora find themselves stranded at Nice. They are practically prisoners at their hotel, and they are kept there by bolts and bars in the shape of bills. Of these, one obligation is most pressing, for they cannot pay their hotel bill. But the Marquise does not submit with resignation to the thought of remaining in this embarrassing position. She makes application for interviews with various gentlemen whom she does not know,—among others with a French Deputy, Favrolle, and a foreign diplomat, Baron Van der Kraft.

It is first to Monsieur Favrolle that the Marquise de Rio-Zarès relates her misfortunes. She is the widow of a Spanish officer, Don Alvar de Rio-Zarès, a former friend of Esparto. Driven into exile by the enmity of Navaez, Don Alvar went to seek his fortune in Paraguay. There he became General, from General he became President, but in crossing a river at the head of his invincible troops he lost his life. His widow, the unfortunate Marquise, had nothing remaining of her vast fortune but a ship-load of guns. This cargo has been seized, on board a French ship, by a Spanish cruiser guarding the coasts of Cuba. She desires to secure restitution and indemnity, and this is why the Marquise de Rio-Zarès has done herself the honour of requesting a visit from the Deputy Favrolle.

¹ English version entitled "Diplomacy."

In listening to this astonishing and melancholy narrative, related in a peculiar jargon, in which Spanish and Catalan are mingled with the dialects of South America, Favrolle at first suspects that the Marquise de Rio-Zarès is an adventuress seeking to borrow money of him. In fact, he believes this so strongly that his suspicions are only removed by his friend, André de Maurillac, who was acquainted in South America with this same extraordinary Don Alvar de Rio-Zarès. André has conceived a passion, although he does not yet know it, for Mademoiselle de Rio-Zarès. This young lady is a unique and fascinating person, beautiful, elegant, seductive as a fairy princess, virtuous as a saint, and poor as a church mouse. She is always surrounded by men who are laying their homage at her feet, but they all carefully refrain from asking her hand in marriage. Though she is personally of spotless character, rumour has been busy with her name. This is so much the case that a certain Stramir—who has been presented to her as a possible husband by the Princess Bariatine—dares to offer her, in good set phrase, a magnificent position, giving her at the same time to understand that he is already married, living apart from his wife, but not divorced. Dora, outraged and indignant, rises and drives him publicly from her presence, hurling her bouquet into his face.

This is the moment chosen by Baron Van der Kraft to make certain overtures to the Marquise de Rio-Zarès, who sees in the quarrel with Stramir the disappearance of her last chance of paying her hotel bill. She had hoped to settle her debts by her daughter making this fortunate marriage.

Baron Van der Kraft is a type of person not unknown in Parisian society. He is a promoter of foreign political intrigues, having a footing in various diplomatic camps, conducting secret police negotiations, and profiting by

speculation in government securities. He has trusted ears in all the drawing-rooms and cunning hands in all the desk-drawers of Paris. The Baron maintains, at Paris and at Versailles, (ostensibly for an Austrian diplomat, the Baron Paulnitz) a small feminine army, a sort of foreign legion, made up of Hungarians, Wallachians, Czechs, Slavonians, South Americans, and English women. These ladies wear gorgeous gowns, and resemble Solomon's lilies in the other respect that they toil not; but they excel at writing letters, which letters pay the cost of their gorgeous gowns. Their perfumed correspondence is filled with gossip, political and other, and it amuses foreign statesmen, even when it does not instruct them. But much is found in these perfumed letters of more interest and value to foreign ministers than that which is found in their official dispatch-boxes.

The reader may wonder whether such private detective agencies really exist in Paris. Beyond doubt they do, and not only there, but in other continental cities as well. More times than one, scandals have come to light, showing that great ladies in European capitals have been in the pay of foreign governments, and reporting the private conversations of their guests for pay.

Such is the curious environment in which Baron Van der Kraft exercises his peculiar talents. The worthy Marquise de Rio-Zarès—who is not cunning, who on the contrary is very simple, and who loves her daughter dearly—is easily persuaded that she is a distant cousin of Baron Paulnitz, and she therefore accepts without question a pension of 12,000 francs, offered to her by Baron Van der Kraft, in the name of Baron Paulnitz. Baron Van der Kraft does not think highly of the ridiculous Marquise de Rio-Zarès, but he hopes to make the daughter useful in his business, by working on her through the mother.

The Baron undertakes to explain to Dora what she is expected to do in return for her mother's pension. Dora

does not understand the approaches of the secret political agent, but she disarms him by a simple avowal, which is that she loves André de Maurillac; she believes he loves her; therefore she does not wish to mingle in political intrigues, and she has no higher ambition than to be André's wife and the mother of his children.

It may be necessary to mention here that André de Maurillac has come to Versailles on a visit to the Princess Bariatine, who has undertaken to assist in returning to Dora's mother the celebrated ship-load of guns. The Princess, who is something of a politician herself, hopes to use this demand for indemnity as a lever for upsetting the Ministry, but the defection of a certain political group, belonging to the Left Center, disconcerts her cunning plans to bring about certain interpellations demanding that the Ministry should exact from the Spanish Government the restitution of the cargo of guns. The Princess's plans are defeated, and thus poor Dora's dower disappears.

This is why the Baron Van der Kraft believes that the hour has come for those proposals which Dora's native honesty repels. This is why André, knowing that the Marquise de Rio-Zarès is ruined, thinks that there is no time for him to lose to make his avowal. Dora, who feels dimly the sentiments which actuate him, doubts him. She has so many times suffered the humiliation of avowals being made to her by men, not as they are offered to an honest and virtuous girl, but as they are addressed to an adventuress, that she fears André might also approach her as other men had done. So it can easily be seen how great is her joy when André tells her he loves her and asks her to be his wife. The Marquise shares the delight of her daughter, and the marriage is arranged apparently without opposition.

There is one quarter, however, from which resistance is to be apprehended, underhand, but none the less formi-

dable on that account. It comes from the Countess Zicka, one of the mysterious ladies subsidized by Baron Van der Kraft. This Countess Zicka, who poses as a noble Hungarian widow, is in reality a woman without reputation, without country, without name, but not without a police record. She has conceived a violent passion for André. Not being able to prevent his marriage, she determines to ruin the happiness of her rival, who believes her to be a friend. She profits by a secret mission, which has been confided to her by Baron Van der Kraft, and weaves a most abominable plot against Dora. She ransacks the private papers of André, who is just about to leave on his wedding journey, and succeeds in finding a secret dispatch, with which he has been entrusted by his uncle, the Minister of Marine, to be taken to Italy. She persuades Dora to write a note to Baron Van der Kraft, excusing herself for not having invited him to her marriage ceremony, and to assure him of her gratitude for past benefits; while Dora is writing the letter, the Countess slips the stolen dispatch into the envelope.

André returns, and is on the point of opening his desk, which will reveal to him the theft, when a visitor is announced, one Tekly. Tekly is a young Hungarian, a revolutionary refugee, exiled by Austria, and who, like many men, had been madly in love with Dora. In the first act we saw him just leaving Nice, when he gave her a photograph of himself, with these words written on the back: "A ella—mi alma—à Dora," which might be translated either "To her—to my soul—to Dora," or "To her whom my soul adores." On his way to Greece Tekly was so imprudent as to go ashore when his ship touched at the Austrian port of Trieste. He was at once arrested by the Austrian police, and was liberated only through the intervention of an Austrian Minister, who was an old friend of his father. Tekly, who did not know that André had

just married Dora, relates to him that his arrest at Trieste had been the result of a secret denunciation, and that this denunciation came from Dora.

André is about to leap upon Tekly in his rage, but is restrained by his friend Favrolle. He demands from Tekly categorical proofs of his assertions. Tekly, suddenly enlightened as to the dreadful charge that he has made, and that the woman he accuses has become the wife of André, endeavours in vain to retract his charge. André will not permit him to do so, and Favrolle persuades Tekly that any man of honour, involuntarily falling into a false situation, in which a woman's reputation is concerned, has but one course to take. It is to tell the truth, in order that, if there be calumny, or scandal, or slander concerning her, it may be brought to light, uncovered, unmasked. The unfortunate Tekly can only plead that what he has uttered is the truth, hard and bitter as it is for him to repeat it. He informs André that he was in the hands of the Austrian Minister, his father's friend; that a photograph had been sent to the Austrian police at Trieste; that they had received notification that he would touch at that port; that no one knew that he was aboard the steamer but Dora; that the photograph which had been sent, in order that the police might identify him, was the photograph which he had given to her, with his words of adoration written on the back. André pleads that the photograph might have been stolen from Dora and sent by some one else. "But," replies Tekly, "no one but Dora knew by which route I should travel."

The proofs are apparently overwhelming, yet André loves his wife so madly that he still endeavors to doubt. But on going to his desk, he perceives that it has been rifled, and that the secret dispatch, entrusted to him by his uncle, has been stolen. His keys have been in no hands

but his own—and Dora's. What a terrible discovery for a wedding day! The unfortunate husband is crushed.

Favrolle is the only one who does not lose his head. He sees at once the possible complicity of Baron Van der Kraft, and succeeds in securing from him Dora's letter, of which the Baron has not yet broken the seal, and of which he does not suspect the importance. André himself opens the letter; out of it falls the stolen document. The proof is crushing, undeniable, overwhelming. André places the letter and the document before Dora. The unfortunate bride, with indignation and shame, protests that she is innocent, but she cannot explain away the fatal circumstances which attack her honor.

Fortunately, the Countess Zicka is caught in her own snare. She has come to Favrolle's quarters, to learn from him what has taken place between the young couple, and to ascertain if she has succeeded in the trap which her infernal jealousy had sprung. Favrolle is absent, but the Countess commits the imprudence of opening his portfolio to read a letter from André that she knows to be there. When Favrolle returns to his desk, he recognises the perfume of the Countess's gloves, which have been lying on his portfolio. This discovery arouses in his mind vague and floating suspicions. He at once weaves hurriedly a plan—simple, but absolutely sure. He persuades the Countess Zicka that she has been betrayed by Van der Kraft, and that he has in his possession copies of the police records revealing her shameful past. Zicka is terrified. In order to avoid disclosure and secure immunity, she avows the crime which she has committed. She clears the character of Dora from the dreadful stain, and the young bride is restored to the arms of her doubting husband, André, no longer doubting, but full of confidence in her love and honour.

LES PATTES DE MOUCHE¹

THE play begins at Chinon, at the country-house of Monsieur and Mme. Vanhove, which has just been reopened after being closed for three years. At that time the family of the late Mme. de Crussolles, mother of Madame Vanhove, had just left Chinon for Paris, where Clarisse de Crussolles was to marry M. Vanhove. Everything had been left exactly as it was, as Mme. de Crussolles intended to return. But her sudden death, immediately after her daughter's marriage, so profoundly impressed the young bride, that she had ordered the château to be kept closed and nothing in it disturbed. Therefore, now that she and her husband and her younger sister, Marthe, are returning, everything in the house, even to the most trifling object, is exactly as it was three years before.

In the opening scene the new servants, brought from Paris, are sweeping and dusting, and the old housekeeper, Solange, warns them not to touch a certain statuette of Flora, which to the late Mme. de Crussolles had been as the apple of her eye. She always dusted this precious piece of Sèvres with her own hands, and her daughter, out of filial affection, allowed no one else to touch it.

The young sister of Mme. Vanhove, Mlle. Marthe de Crussolles, is adored by the young stripling, M. Paul. He is domiciled in an adjacent country-house, whose master, M. Thirion, is his guardian, although M. Thirion's wife, Colomba, is so masterful a lady, and takes so profound an interest in Paul, that she rather than her husband might be said to be his guardian.

The Thirions discover Paul in a tête-à-tête with his lady love; it is in the Vanhove park, where M. Thirion is

¹ Best-known English version entitled "A Scrap of Paper."

chasing butterflies, for he is an ardent entomologist. Mme. Thirion takes her husband severely to task for permitting this flirtation, saying that she does not think much of the family, as Marthe's elder sister, Mme. Vanhove, was a good deal talked about at Chinon some three or four years before, when M. Prosper Block was dangling around her. This same M. Prosper, it seems, has just arrived from India; he is an old friend of Thirion, and is comfortably installed as a guest at the Thirion château for an indefinite period—not entirely to the liking of Mme. Thirion. He is, it would appear, her husband's friend, and not hers.

While the Thirion spouses are wrangling, Prosper enters, wearing a suit of yellow nankeen, carrying a sunshade, and fluttering a Chinese fan. He relates with the utmost placidity that he had just made a tour of the neighbouring village, where the natives betrayed surprise and hilarity on seeing him. He further tells of having met a young lady, evidently not of the village, mounted on a handsome horse; this Diana could not conceal her merri-ment when her eyes fell on him. He goes into ecstasies over this young Amazon, and asks who she may be. He is told that she is Mlle. Marthe, younger sister of Mme. Vanhove. M. Prosper, being a child of nature, frankly announces that she has won his heart; that it is a case of love at first sight, and that he will immediately seek a serious interview with her brother-in-law, M. Vanhove. He asks what manner of man is this Vanhove, and is told that he is a Hollander; that he is sombre, suspicious, and jealous. Vanhove, it seems, is jealous beyond belief; he is wildly in love with his wife, and is hardly conscious of the existence of her sister, Marthe, or of her cousin, Suzanne, who is a frequent visitor. Suzanne is a Parisian, an orphan, has a large fortune in her own right, is nearing thirty, is pretty, witty, but has never married, because she

says she wishes to remain free. Fortified with these particulars, Prosper goes to seek the sombre M. Vanhove.

If the chatty French globe-trotter, Prosper, could be disconcerted by anyone, it would be by the gloomy Hollander, Vanhove. To his most captivating conversational sallies, Prosper receives only monosyllabic replies. Despairingly he finally comes to business; he tells Vanhove that he has squandered the fortune left him by the paternal Block; that not far away he has a millionaire uncle living, who wishes him to marry; that the aforesaid uncle has given him a certain time within which to find a bride; that if in six weeks' time Prosper remains unwed, the uncle threatens himself to marry—his housekeeper. Therefore Prosper has installed himself as a guest with his old friend Thirion, and has come to present to M. Vanhove a demand for the hand of his sister-in-law, Mlle. Marthe. To this Vanhove replies indifferently that it does not concern him, and that Prosper must see his wife and her sister about the matter. Prosper informs him that some three years before, when he was a guest of the Thirions, he had already been fortunate enough to meet Mme. Vanhove before her marriage. Therefore, as an introduction is unnecessary, Vanhove bids a servant announce Monsieur Block to Madame Vanhove, and goes off to his kennels, for he is a mighty Nimrod, and a dog-lover before the Lord.

While he is waiting for the lady of the château, Prosper looks around the room. He notices that everything is exactly as it was when he had been there three years before. He even recalls a certain book which Clarisse and he were reading together on the momentous night; he goes to the table, and examines a volume lying there. "It is the same!" he says to himself. "Why, it is like the fairy tale of the enchanted wood. Everything is exactly as we left it—even the statuette of Flora." And he is approaching the Flora to inspect it, when Mme. Vanhove appears.

This delicate interview opens coolly, but speedily becomes animated. From the somewhat tense conversation it appears that these two young people had loved one another madly, but that some unexplained circumstance had brought about a complete rupture of their relations. Hence there is an embarrassment on both sides, which is not lessened when Prosper presents his claim for the hand of Marthe. Clarisse at once vehemently replies:

"This marriage must not, nay, it shall not take place! While I have nothing to blush for in the school-girl passion which I felt for you, Monsieur, you certainly must understand that I could not tolerate as my sister's husband, and as a familiar frequenter of my husband's home, the man whom I foolishly thought that I loved before I loved my husband. Withdraw your demand, Monsieur, I beg of you."

"And you call it a school-girl love," says Prosper bitterly! "So it was a school-girl love for which I have exiled myself and wasted my life for three years! Yet it did not seem to me then that it was a school-girl love. I was foolish enough then to believe that you loved me as I loved you—with an ardent and an honest passion. And the letters that you wrote me certainly seemed sincere. Do not start—I burned them all, as I promised to do. Do you remember our letter-box? It is here still—the statuette of Flora. It seems as if it were only the night before last that I was leaving you in this room, tenderly saying 'good-bye until to-morrow.' And you replied to me with equal tenderness 'until to-morrow then, good-bye.' To-morrow is here, but you—you are Mme. Vanhove. Such is woman's constancy."

Clarisse chafes under these reproaches. She replies that he is unjust; that the very next day her mother had informed her of the demand of the millionaire M. Vanhove for her hand; that in spite of her tears, her mother had

insisted that she must marry Vanhove; that she had written a passionate letter to Prosper, beseeching him to follow them to Paris, where she would elope with him before they could marry her to Vanhove; that she had hidden the letter in the appointed place; that she had accompanied her mother to Paris. But no word had come from Prosper; crushed and humiliated by his silence, she had permitted the marriage to take place.

Prosper is equally indignant at her reproaches. He tells her that the day after their last meeting a gentleman of the neighbourhood had used language reflecting on her coquettish tendencies, which Prosper had at once resented. A duel followed, and Prosper received a thrust through the lungs which laid him on his back for some time. "Your marriage," he concludes, bitterly, "was the first news with which they greeted my convalescence."

"Then my letter did not reach you?" asks Clarisse, anxiously.

"No, Madame," replies Prosper, "for the best of reasons—I could not have come after it—I was delirious in bed."

"Then it must be there still," says Clarisse, feverishly. "Alas! if my husband were to find it!"

"I will see if it is there," says Prosper, and he goes toward the statuette.

"Stop," says Clarisse in a whisper, "here comes my husband now!"

It is, in fact, Vanhove; he is accompanied by M. and Mme. Thirion and Marthe and Paul. Vanhove notes with suspicion the traces of emotion on Clarisse's countenance, and then turns and gazes distrustfully at Prosper. His suspicions are not allayed by Clarisse's announcement that Prosper has withdrawn his demand for the hand of Marthe; they are aggravated by a lively protestation from Prosper that he has not withdrawn his demand at all.

As the conversation proceeds, both Clarisse and Prosper circle around the statuette with apparent carelessness, but in reality each is seeking an opportunity to look for the letter.

In the midst of this strained situation, Suzanne, the Parisian cousin, enters. She is received with enthusiasm by Marthe, with affection by Clarisse, and with indifference by Vanhove. Under cover of the bustle attending her arrival, Prosper attempts to lift the statuette. But Suzanne observes him, and says suddenly, "Who is this gentleman?" All turn to look at him, and Prosper quickly replaces the statuette as if it burned his fingers. He is introduced to Suzanne, and while she engages him in conversation, Clarisse goes stealthily toward the statuette. Just as she is about to touch it, Prosper turns and addresses her. Everybody looks at her, and she is forced to join the group. This by-play is observed by Suzanne, who watches them narrowly.

Prosper turns the conversation to bric-à-brac. He says that the Orientals surpass us in their porcelains. "Show me in this salon," he says, "a single object comparable to an Oriental masterpiece. Take this bit of Sèvres"—he goes towards it. "A Flora is it not?" He takes it up. Clarisse hastens toward him as if to stop him, but he says: "Oh, do not fear, Madame, I know its value."

"But," interrupts Clarisse, anxiously, "it is covered with dust. Let me dust it with my handkerchief."

"Do not trouble," answers Prosper, "I will take it to one side and blow the dust off."

While he turns his back upon the group, as if to blow off the dust, Vanhove rises in surprise, and begins to note this little comedy. Suzanne also rises and whispers to Clarisse, "Be careful, your husband is watching you." Even as she is speaking, the letter falls to the floor. Prosper at once places his foot upon it. Suzanne mur-

murs to herself, "Oh! a letter! I knew there was something between them," and turning she at once engages Vanhove in conversation.

Prosper hands the statuette to Clarisse, saying, "I see, Madame, you are afraid to trust this priceless object to my careless hands."

She replies in a low voice, "Monsieur, this is cowardly, this is infamous!"

To which he replies also in a low tone, but gaily, "All is fair in war, Madame."

Luncheon is announced, and as Prosper has not budged from his place, but is still standing upon the letter, Suzanne approaches him, and says, "Won't you give me your arm, Monsieur?"

"With pleasure," he replies. "But permit me—one moment—I have dropped something." Deftly dropping his handkerchief upon the letter, he picks up both letter and handkerchief.

"Come, come," says Suzanne to him in a low voice, "be generous. Give it up."

"Give up what?" replies the ingenuous Prosper.

"Give up the letter," says Suzanne; "you know what I mean."

"No, indeed," he replies, "we are on the verge of hostilities. It is my reserve."

"Then I will make you give it up," says Suzanne, determinedly.

"Is this a declaration of war?" asks Prosper.

"To the knife," replies Suzanne.

"When shall hostilities begin?" asks Prosper.

"After luncheon," she replies. "But give me your arm, for the husband is watching us."

And the two adversaries walk placidly in to luncheon, arm in arm.

In the second act, we find ourselves in the apartments

of Prosper, in Thirion's house. On every hand are curiosities which betoken the much travelled man. Against the wall there stands a tall, Egyptian mummy-case. Everywhere are scattered stuffed birds and beasts, curious weapons, Oriental pottery, and pipes. On the floor are rugs, made from the skins of wild beasts slain by Prosper's deadly gun. One of the tables is completely covered with little curios, and the knick-knacks usually found on a man's table, such as cigars and cigarettes, ink, pens, and paper, trinket-trays, sealing wax, and a little basket full of cards and letters.

Prosper is seated in the midst of his Lares and Penates, smoking and musing. He is putting to himself the question, where shall he conceal the letter? He frankly admits that he has a wholesome fear of the finesse of Mademoiselle Suzanne. He successively considers hiding it in his hat, concealing it in the trunk of a tree, or confiding it to his friend Thirion. "But," as he philosophically remarks, "Thirion is a married man, and therefore not to be trusted."

Looking around the room, Prosper's eye falls upon a little casket, but he shakes his head. "Another," says he, "might put it in the casket, but I shall show my genius by concealing it in the only place where no one would ever dream of looking for it, that is to say, in——"

A knock is heard. Enter M. Paul. Paul is pallid with emotion. Since he has heard of Prosper's pretensions to the hand of Marthe, he wishes to fight him. Prosper at once consents, but on condition that he shall have the choice of weapons. He takes down two Japanese harikari knives, and gravely proposes to Paul that they shall fight in the Japanese fashion, which is, to disembowel themselves, and that, as Paul is the challenger, he shall begin.

As the lovelorn youth is gazing at him with astonishment and horror, another knock is heard. Mme. Thirion and Marthe appear. They have come expecting to find

Suzanne and the other members of the Vanhove household, who had made an appointment with them to visit Prosper's museum. Suzanne is not far behind them. She enters on their heels.

Prosper shows them his collection of curios, and Suzanne comments satirically on his taste for foreign bric-à-brac. "Show me," says she, "a gentleman seated in an American rocking-chair, before a Flemish table, covered with an Algerian table-cloth, and drinking in Dresden china a Chinese beverage, while smoking Turkish tobacco, after eating a Russian dinner, during which he has been talking sport in English to his wife, who has been talking music to him in Italian, and I will tell you at once that he is a Frenchman."

After the guests have gone over the collection of curios, they depart, Suzanne the last. But scarcely have they left when she returns.

"I am delighted to see you again," says Prosper gaily. "I feared that you were in full retreat."

"What, before the battle?" retorts Suzanne. "It is easy to see that you do not know me. But before hostilities begin, let us have a few diplomatic preliminaries. Our side appeals to the honor of our adversary. We demand that he return to us the letter which the rules of common honesty forbid him to keep."

"To which I reply," says Prosper, "that the letter, being sent to me, and taken by me, is in its proper place—in my hands."

"But you did not receive it—therefore it is ours," says Suzanne.

"But you sent it to me—therefore it is mine," says Prosper.

"In that case," says Suzanne, "we wish to know what you intend to do with the letter?"

"I will reply categorically," answers Prosper. "I will

preserve the letter and I will preserve neutrality. The day that I renounce my pretensions to Mlle. Marthe, and make my final adieus to Mme. Vanhove—that day will I burn the letter before her eyes. I would have burned it this morning in my rooms and said nothing about it, if your defiance had not piqued me to the game of war.”

“Come, come,” says Suzanne, coaxingly; “consider what I said unsaid, and burn it before me. There is a bright fire—here is a chance to do a good action.”

“No,” replies Prosper. “I would lose the artistic satisfaction I expect to enjoy in seeing how you will discover where I have concealed the letter. The letter is here. If you find it I authorize you to burn it yourself.”

“No,” replies Suzanne. “I also require the artistic satisfaction of seeing you burn it with your own hands and at this fire.”

“If you accomplish this,” says Prosper, “I swear to you on my honour that I will leave this very night to seek a wife in the Isles of Polynesia.”

“You have sworn it,” says Suzanne, “and now I shall commence my blockade. I shall stick to you so assiduously that you will hate the very sight of me; I shall be insupportable, interminable, odious.”

“Mademoiselle,” replies Prosper, “never was man threatened with so delightful a punishment. I am intoxicated with joy at the mere thought of the hours I shall pass in your company. Be good enough to seat yourself in my easy-chair. Consider yourself at home. There are some photographs of travel which may interest you. Everything is open. All the keys are in their locks. Come and go, open and shut, ransack at your will. In the meantime, I am forced to leave you, to pay a necessary visit. My only excuse is that it is to a very rich uncle. My only hope is that I may find you here on my return. Au revoir, Mademoiselle.”

As he departs, Suzanne gazes after him with mingled feelings. "Really," says she, "this dramatic exit is not unlike an impertinence. He leaves me free to search for the letter, but he also leaves me in his private apartments—therefore compromised."

A knock is heard. "Now I wonder who that is?" mutters Suzanne.

The door opens, and Clarisse enters. The moment she sees who it is, Suzanne immediately locks the door behind her. Clarisse breathlessly tells that she has seen Prosper on his horse riding down the road, and has hastened at once to his apartments, coming so hurriedly that she had only time to throw a shawl around her shoulders. She at once begins a feverish search about the room. Suzanne watches her, while herself seated tranquilly at the table. When Clarisse reproaches her for her indifference, she replies that so clever a man as Prosper would not hide the letter in an ordinary hiding-place; that to her thinking it must be somewhere in the open. She turns over the heaps of opened letters lying on the table in the basket. She looks at one. It is addressed "M. Prosper Block, Honolulu." The envelope is already opened; it is dingy and torn. She hesitates, but murmuring "all is fair in war," she takes out the enclosure. Clarisse had written on blue paper—this is on blue paper. Clarisse had written on a half sheet folded in two—this is on a half sheet folded in two.

They open the letter. It is in Clarisse's handwriting, and it begins: "*My dear love, I leave to-night for Paris.*"

"Your dear love, indeed!" cries Suzanne. "Lucky for you that we found it instead of Vanhove."

As she speaks a loud knocking is heard at the door. A voice is heard crying, "Open the door!" It is the voice of Vanhove.

Clarisse flies in terror to the bedroom, despite the objections of Suzanne, who tries to detain her. But the

terrified wife loses her head, enters Prosper's chamber, and locks the door. As she does so Suzanne unlocks the outer door, and admits Vanhove.

He is apparently surprised to find Suzanne alone. He insists that Clarisse is with her, which she denies. He says he heard voices, and demands to know with whom she was talking. She says she was reading the labels on the curios. He is still suspicious, and tells her that he is certain that there is something between his wife and Prosper; that the whispering of the day before over the statuette had aroused his suspicions; that he believes Prosper's sudden demand for Marthe's hand was merely a pretext; that it was a pre-arranged plan to lull the husband's suspicions; that these ideas had suddenly come to a crisis in his mind while he was out shooting. He returned at once, went back to his house, and was told that Clarisse was out. He bade his dog, Myrrha, seek her mistress. The dog had led him to the door at which he had just knocked—the door of Prosper's room.

Suzanne reproaches him bitterly for his suspicions, and tells him that a man who would set a dog upon his wife's footsteps would believe anything. She finally succeeds in quieting him, and he is about to leave reassured, when he suddenly sees the shawl which Clarisse in her haste had left upon a chair. He breaks forth in a fresh frenzy of rage, and seizing his gun tells Suzanne that he will kill both Prosper and his mistress, Clarisse.

Suzanne here determines to shield Clarisse at any cost. "Stop!" she cries, "you madman! If you wish to kill the mistress of Prosper, kill me, for I am his mistress." As Vanhove recoils in surprise, she goes on: "You force me, then, to restrain you from your rash action, to tell you the truth. Do you think that a woman comes alone to a man's rooms to look at curios? If I did not at once open the door it was because I feared discovery. If your dog

led you to this door, it was because I was wearing Clarisse's shawl. If Clarisse is opposed to the marriage of Marthe with Prosper, it is because she knows of my liaison with him."

Vanhove is thunderstruck at this revelation. "How blind I have been," he says. "I remember now that this man spoke of a love affair dating some three years back. I did not dream that it was with you. But be calm, Suzanne, no one shall know your secret. Out of evil shall come good, for this M. Block shall not marry Marthe, he shall marry you."

Suzanne is overcome by this new complication, and endeavours to dissuade Vanhove. But the stubborn Hollander can not be dissuaded. He tells her that he will make it his affair; that he will see Prosper at once; and that if before evening Prosper has not promised to marry Suzanne, he will take Prosper by the neck, and choke the life out of him. Vanhove babbles of his love for Clarisse, of his regard for Suzanne, of his determination to force Prosper to marry her—all this with such volubility that he does not give Suzanne a chance to get in a word. Still talking, he dashes out in a whirl of excitement. As he leaves, Suzanne falls into a chair. "And they call him a silent man!" she groans.

As the door closes behind him, Clarisse timidly peeps from the bed-chamber and says:

"Suzanne, dear, how can I ever thank you? I was lost, and you have saved me."

"Yes," replies Suzanne, drily, "I have saved you, and now I am lost."

Clarisse is still in mortal terror lest her husband should discover the letter and should learn something from his meeting with Prosper. So she begs Suzanne to burn the letter and to urge Prosper to leave at once. In the mean-

time, she hastens away, to reach her home before Vanhove arrives there.

After her departure Suzanne reflects that it is easy to burn the letter, but not easy to make Prosper go. "Still," she says to herself, "he swore to me that if I made him burn it, he would depart at once for the Polynesian Islands." She determines to place the letter in a tempting way twisted like a cigar-lighter between the bars of the fender. She then takes the matches from the mantel-place, and throws them into the fire. Then, hearing the sound of Prosper's footsteps, she throws herself into an easy chair with an air of complete exhaustion.

When Prosper enters, a duel of words takes place between the two, which Suzanne finally interrupts by complaining that it is growing dark and asking for lights. Prosper rings for lights, when Suzanne points to the candles on the mantel-piece and suggests that he light them. He seeks vainly for matches, when his eye falls upon the twisted scrap of paper. He holds it to the fire, and it breaks into a little flame. Suzanne watches him breathlessly, but at this moment a servant enters with a lighted lamp, saying, "Did you ring for lights, sir?" Prosper says, "Yes, yes," and mechanically extinguishes the flaming scrap of paper which he still holds in his fingers.

The two duellists are now seated at the table, with the lighted lamp between them. Suzanne begins toying with the Honolulu envelope, and Prosper grows restless. But she throws it down. She appeals to him as a man of honour. She is eloquent, she is touching, and at last Prosper tells her she may command him in anything; that he thinks she is not only beautiful but good; that he adores her; that he will always be her slave, and, as a proof of his servitude, he will burn the letter before her eyes. So saying, he picks up the Honolulu envelope with the tongs, holds it in the

fire, and when it is nothing but ashes, deposits them at her feet.

Suzanne, looking at him with humid eyes, and feeling the power of a woman over the man who loves her, almost forgets that he has not burned the real letter. But she regains her calmness. She points it out to him, lying on the floor, and bids him burn it. Prosper does not understand what it is, but mechanically picks it up.

As he does so, the barking of the dogs is heard without. Vanhove and the other sportsmen are returning. As Suzanne still bids him burn this strange bit of paper, Prosper hurriedly holds the real letter to the candle flame. But as it catches fire the voice of Vanhove is heard at the door. Prosper tosses the flaming paper out of the window, and it falls into the garden below. Suzanne rapidly tells him that the first paper which he burned was not the letter; that the one he had just tossed out of the window is the incriminating epistle. With sudden understanding he tells her that he will secure it, come what may, and he darts out of the door on his way to the garden.

The sportsmen have returned from the chase. Among them is Thirion, who is being good-humoredly chaffed by his companions because he has been chasing butterflies instead of shooting partridges. They have crossed Thirion's garden, and are now assembled in Vanhove's conservatory. Thirion defends himself, saying that he had seen a very rare specimen of the *Lepidoptera*, which he had succeeded in catching, and points to his gun, which he has placed in a corner. Out of the muzzle of the gun protrudes a scrap of paper twisted into a cornucopia; in this, says Thirion, is imprisoned the famous specimen he has caught.

Into the conservatory come Suzanne and Prosper. He comes from Thirion's garden, following the steps of the returning sportsmen, who had passed under his window.

Suzanne has searched also, but neither has found the scrap of paper. They ransack their brains for every possible thing that can have happened to it, but cannot think of any solution. So Suzanne sends Prosper forth again to search for the letter.

Suzanne encounters Busonier, one of the gentlemen returning from the hunt with Vanhove. She interrogates him closely. Did he see a piece of flaming paper fall from the window? Yes, he did. What happened to it? Somebody picked it up. Who picked it up—was it Vanhove? Busonier racks his brain for some minutes, and finally remembers that it was not Vanhove but Thirion who picked it up. And Suzanne drops him like lightning and hastens off to find Thirion.

As Suzanne goes out, the youthful Paul enters the conservatory, which is now deserted. He is in disgrace; Mme. Thirion thinks he takes too much interest in young women, and is neglecting his studies. Therefore, his place will not be laid at dinner that evening; instead of that, his things are packed, and he is to go back to school by the five o'clock train. Paul is in despair. He may not see Marthe before his departure. He must leave in a few minutes. He determines to write her a note. He feverishly ransacks his pockets, but has no note-book, not even a scrap of paper upon him. His eye falls on Thirion's gun, which is standing in a corner. In its muzzle is a scrap of paper. Paul flies toward it and opens it. He sees that it contains a butterfly. "Bah!" he mutters; "what is one more or less in my guardian's enormous collection?" He smooths out the letter, seats himself at the table, folds and tears off the burned portion, and taking out a pencil, begins to write on the blank side.

As he is writing he hears the sound of voices. It is Suzanne and Thirion. She is asking Thirion what he did with the little scrap of paper. Paul says suddenly, "There

is my guardian—I must hide,” and he conceals himself behind a large palm in a jardinière.

Suzanne, Thirion, and Busonier enter, still talking of the scrap of paper. Thirion tells her that he put it in the muzzle of his gun. They go to the gun, but the paper is gone. Suzanne says feverishly, “We must find it—look for it! Look for it! both of you!” But as she sees Vanhove entering the conservatory, she says “No, no! don’t look for it!”

Here the signal for dinner is given, and the guests all pass through the conservatory on their way to the dining-room. All, that is to say, except the luckless Paul, who is restricted to gazing upon his lady-love through the open door. He seizes upon a new waiting-maid, who does not know all the guests. He offers her a gold piece to take a note to a certain lady at the table. She accepts the mission, takes the note, and promises to slip it under the lady’s plate at a favorable moment.

But Prosper enters, and Paul again conceals himself. Lying on the floor, Prosper sees a scrap of paper. He picks it up with a cry of joy. But it is only the scorched fragment which Paul tore off when he was writing his love-letter.

Vanhove, hearing Prosper’s cry, leaves the dining-room to see what caused it. He sees Prosper, and at once accosts him. He asks Prosper if he still persists in his demand for Marthe’s hand. Prosper replies that Mme. Vanhove’s objections have caused him to withdraw his demand. To this Vanhove replies that the objections were caused by the existence of a previous attachment—he refers to Suzanne’s love for Prosper. Prosper thinks he means his love for Clarisse. A most amusing misunderstanding occurs between the two men. Vanhove insists upon bringing about a reconciliation—he means between Suzanne and Prosper. Prosper thinks he means himself and Clarisse.

The interview is growing stormy, when Suzanne enters. To avert the impending duel, she throws herself at the feet of the astonished Prosper, swears to him that she has always been faithful, and begs him to give her back her honour. To all this the beaming Vanhove nods approval. At first Prosper does not understand that this comedy is for Vanhove's benefit, but, being a keen-witted person, he speedily jumps at the truth, and determines to take an unexpected advantage of his loving Suzanne. He admits everything; he owns that his fault was grievous, but swears that he will make amends, and that he will be true to her. Therefore, as Suzanne loves him and he loves her, he calls Vanhove to witness that they have agreed to marry. So saying he clasps the now reluctant and struggling Suzanne in a hearty embrace.

Upon this interesting scene there arrive all the company from the dining-room. Vanhove, with the air of an old matchmaker, pointing to the affectionate couple, remarks gravely: "I have the honour to announce the marriage of my cousin Suzanne with M. Prosper Block."

There is a rebellious flash in Suzanne's eyes as she receives the congratulations of the company, but she is fairly caught and she knows it.

But there is one of the company who is not engaged in congratulating the young couple. It is Thirion. He has surprised the new waiting-maid slipping a note under his wife's plate at table. He has seized upon the note. It is written on blue paper. He is reading it aloud. It begins, "*My dear love—I leave to-night for Paris.*" And as Vanhove approaches him to ask the cause of his emotion, Thirion suddenly says: "You are the master of the house. You must know your guests' writing. Who wrote this?" and he hands the scrap of paper to Vanhove. The latter takes it, turns it over mechanically, and begins reading the note pencilled by Paul on the other side. While they are

disputing over the different readings, Prosper seizes the letter, saying that it is his. Vanhove looks at him suspiciously, and asks him to prove it.

"This is the proof," says Prosper. "I will give it to my future wife to read."

Suzanne takes it, and generously declares that she has such faith in her future husband that she will burn it unread. Vanhove warns her not to be too impulsive; that her whole future happiness may depend upon this letter. But she smiles at Prosper, and extending the letter into the flame, she holds it there steadily until it is all consumed. Then she gives her hand to Prosper.

"Upon my word, sir," says Vanhove, "you are a lucky fellow to have so trusting a wife."

PATRIE¹

THE drama "Patrie" is generally regarded as Sardou's masterpiece. It was first produced on March 18th, 1869, at the Porte St. Martin. It was not staged at the Théâtre-Français until March 11, 1901. Thus thirty-two years elapsed before one of the best contemporaneous French plays found its way to the first French theatre, and even that was due to a fortuitous incident. Some years before, a young woman at the Paris Conservatoire was about to recite passages from the rôle of Dolorès in "Patrie." Ambroise Thomas, then director of the Paris Conservatoire, forbade it, because the rules prescribed that candidates for prizes could recite only from plays produced at the Théâtre-Français. Alexander Dumas *fils* warmly denounced this regulation. Jules Claretie, another member of the jury, promised to produce "Patrie" at the Théâtre-Français, of which he was director. But it was several years before he could carry out his promise, and just as the rehearsals of "Patrie" were in progress the theatre was destroyed by fire. It was not until the new Théâtre-Français was erected that Sardou's famous play was produced at a government theatre.

Sardou was noted for his attention to detail in mounting his plays. When "Patrie" was first produced, even in 1869, it was well staged. So when it was reproduced at the Porte St. Martin in 1886. But its final production at the Théâtre-Français, in 1901, was generally considered to be the finest dramatic production ever put upon the stage in Paris. The costumes, the scenery, the historical furniture, the pictures, the tapestries, and the *mise-en-scène*

¹ Best-known English versions entitled "Fatherland," "Dolores," "A Sorceress of Love."

generally, amazed the Parisians. The market-place, where the Dutch prisoners were brought before the austere Spanish officers; the sombre interior of Risoor's house, with its magnificent tapestry; its massive plate reposing on a richly carved sideboard; the Duke of Alva's Palace; the Hôtel de Ville of Brussels; the Tower of St. Gudule; the lines of picturesquely attired Spanish soldiers; the march of Dutch prisoners to the stake; the gorgeously vested priests and prelates reciting prayers; the funeral music and the muffled drums—all of these were arranged in eight tableaux, which were marvels of stage painting and setting. The Duke of Alva carried a silver reliquary, an actual relic of the Inquisition; it belonged to the famous collection of Sardou, who lent it to the actor Paul Mounet. The crucifix carried in the funeral procession was copied from a Spanish 16th century original belonging to the collection of Jules Claretie, Director of the Théâtre-Français.

Sardou was famous for his interference at rehearsals. He was nearly seventy at the reproduction of "Patrie" in 1901, but he skipped about the stage and gave orders regardless of the consequences. At one time he became embroiled with the leading man, Mounet-Sully, and it required all the tact of Director Claretie to restore peace. When the funeral procession entered, with the Spanish soldiers beating a funeral march with muffled drums, Sardou put his fingers to his ears and shouted: "Stop! stop! that's not the way to roll drums. You must roll *crescendo*. Three ruffles of the drum *crescendo* stopping with a *staccato*. Here, like this," and seizing a pair of drumsticks, he showed the amazed drummers the effect he wanted.

The first act of "Patrie" begins in Brussels, in 1568, when the terrible Duke of Alva is attempting to stamp out the liberty of a free people with fire and sword. The first

scene is in the old market-place of Brussels. It is at the time when the entire population of the Netherlands, some three millions of men, women, and children, have had formal sentence of death passed upon them. This gives to the bloody Duke the right to execute any individual, by merely affirming the sentence of the Council of Blood.

The great market-place has been occupied by the Spanish soldiers as a camp. Camp-fires are burning here and there; a group of officers is around one fire, soldiers around the others. The scene is picturesque. Groups of soldiers are playing at cards and dice, drinking, cooking, and cleaning their arms. Female camp-followers and their children are among the groups.

While the Council is sitting in the camp, a woman is dragged before them by the soldiers. They are with difficulty restrained from tearing her to pieces. They accuse her of having killed Spanish soldiers. A councillor asks her: "Have you killed any Spanish soldiers?" She replies briefly: "I have killed six." The soldiers cry out that she is a witch and demand that she be killed. But the Council silences them, and asks: "Why did you kill them?" The woman replies, "Do you ask me why? I will tell you. I am of the country. I live outside the city. Your soldiers came to my house. They stole, they pillaged, they drank. When they were all drunk, they put my husband to death with clubs and held my son up to the fire until he died, in order to force him to tell where our money was concealed. Then, drunk both with blood and wine, they took my daughter, a child of sixteen, a bright and innocent little thing, and had their will of her, turning her from one to another, amusing themselves, as they called it, until she died of shame and rage. While this was going on, I was bound, and calling upon God, the God who is deaf, the God who does not see, the God who does not exist. No, there is no God, there cannot be, or He would

not allow bandits like you to desolate the earth. But if He would not avenge me, I determined to avenge myself. I told them to release me, and I would give them yet more drink. They did so, and I gave them drink, until they were all in a drunken stupor. Then I barred window and door, and set the house on fire. I burned them to death. I burned them alive. Do you understand, you knaves? I can hear them shrieking yet for mercy, and I have only one regret, and that is that it finished too soon." The soldiers surround her, yelling with rage, and demand that she be given up to them. The councillors are wavering and about to yield, when suddenly a bell sounds. It is the Angelus. All, councillors and soldiers alike, fall on their knees and silently pray while the Angelus rings. When the bell stops, the soldiers arise from their knees, seize the unfortunate woman, and again howling with rage, drag her out to be put to death.

The next to appear before the Council is the Count de Rysoor. He is an ardent patriot, a lover of his country, a hater of Spain. Hence the Spanish Council has its watchful eye on him. He has been absent from the city for several days. This is an offence which, under the Spanish rule, is punishable with death. Rysoor denies it, but a Spanish spy swears that he left his house Saturday morning at noon and did not return until Tuesday after Vespers. As Rysoor still denies the charge, a Spanish captain, Rincon, is called. He is quartered at Rysoor's house. He denies the testimony of the spy, and when the Council questions the accuracy of his recollection, he says:

"I not only saw Rysoor at his house last night, but I fought with him. I had come home late, had supped well, and had perhaps drunk a little too much. There was no light on the staircase, so I was feeling for the steps with the end of my sword. Just as I reached the top of the first flight, a man came hurriedly out of Count Rysoor's

chamber, led by a lady with a candle; they collided with me. We exchanged some words, and Count Rysoor called me a drunkard. I lifted my sword in anger, but he grasped it in his hand, and threw me from him with such force that I fell down the stairs. I am sorry to say that I was so much intoxicated that I remained there, and awoke in the morning at the foot of the staircase." To this testimony Count Rysoor listens with terrible agitation. In truth, he had been away four days on a secret mission to the Prince of Orange, and had arranged a plan by which the Prince was to enter the city that very night, with a large force of men, and attack the Spanish troops. But when he hears this evidently truthful testimony of the Spanish captain, he learns that some man has come at midnight out of his wife's chamber. He is liberated by the Council, but he has made the terrible discovery that his wife is unfaithful.

When the councillors are gone, Rysoor takes Rincon aside, and interrogates him as if he had in reality fought with him on the staircase that night, but his sole purpose is to draw from him, if possible, who the man was. But Rincon evidently knows nothing, and sincerely believes that the man he met in the darkness was Rysoor himself, for he asks about his wounded hand; he says that when Rysoor grappled with him and grasped the Spaniard's sword, his hand was badly cut. Rincon points at Rysoor's hand, and asks if it is yet healed. Rysoor bends his head affirmatively. His right hand is gloved. "Yes," he says, "it is well now."

The second scene is in the house of Rysoor. It is a Flemish interior, reproducing the house of a Flemish nobleman in the sixteenth century. Here an interview takes place between Karloo and Dolorès, the wife of Rysoor. Karloo is his bosom friend, but also the secret lover of his wife. Yet Karloo is a laggard lover, and struggles against the guilty bonds in which he finds himself enmeshed. He realizes his treachery to his friend, but

cannot escape from the fascination which Dolorès exercises over him. Rysoor returning finds them together, but is not suspicious of his friend. He converses with him concerning the plot for seizing Brussels that night, and Karloo departs.

Rysoor turns to his wife. He tells her that he has discovered her infidelity. She attempts to deny it, but becomes involved in a mass of contradictions and is forced to admit her guilt. She tells him then that she is of Spanish blood, that she is of the Catholic religion, that there is nothing in common between them, and furthermore, that he loves his country passionately, much more than his wife, and that his neglect of his wife for his country had led to her infidelity. He attempts to force her to betray the name of her paramour, but she firmly refuses.

The next scene is at the Louvain gate of Brussels; here a counterscarp descends into the frozen moat, and the roadways are covered with snow. The moon shines down on this white-clad landscape. In the center of the frozen moat is a large opening—cut there for corpses, the cemeteries being gorged. It is here at this gate that the conspirators are to meet, and presently the Prince of Orange and his trusted lieutenants, among them Rysoor and Karloo, enter. From the dialogue we learn that six thousand cavalry are concealed in the Forest of Cambre, near at hand, and twelve thousand men are ready with arms within the walls to join them; that the signal is to be given by Jonas, the bell-ringer, from the belfry at midnight. The drawbridge is to be lowered by the bribed guards, and the cavalry without and the foot troops within are immediately to take possession of the Spanish posts. If all goes well, Jonas is to sound the festival peal on the bell; if anything goes wrong, the death knell is to be sounded.

Suddenly, a signal is given, and the conspirators are thus warned that a Spanish patrol is making the round

of the sentry posts, approaching from the left, or the Cologne gate. As the conspirators are about to conceal themselves until the patrol shall have passed, suddenly a second signal comes from the right. Another Spanish patrol is approaching from that direction. There is indecision for a moment among the conspirators, who draw their swords, determined to charge the patrol, but the Prince of Orange does not lose his calmness. He bids the conspirators hide themselves behind the wall, and says that his "island sea dogs" will do the business. The latter promptly appear, hardy looking sailors, each with a coil of rope about his waist. They crouch down in the shadow of the wall. Just at this moment the Spanish patrol of six men are seen rounding the corner of the counterscarp. As they are about going around the gash in the frozen moat, which bars their passage, a third signal is heard; it is the cry of an owl. The seamen throw themselves upon the patrol, two men to each soldier; one casts a noose around the soldier's neck and strangles him, while the other binds him hand and foot. The soldiers, surprised and strangling, struggle feebly, and this strange battle goes on under the moonlight with scarcely a sound. The conspirators emerge from the shadow, and aid the sailors to throw the struggling and bound soldiers into the hole in the ice. The others climb up on the counterscarp, and with hands and swords heap down loose snow upon the soldiers' bodies. In a moment, the grave in the frozen moat is filled. Again the cry of the owl is heard, and the conspirators fall back into the darkness. The second Spanish patrol comes from the right, placidly marches across in the moonlight, tramps over the hastily packed snow, beneath which lie the bodies of their comrades, so recently living, and passes off at the left.

The fourth scene is in the cabinet of the Duke of Alva in the Government Palace. Karloo has come to ask the

Duke of Alva for permission to remove the chains stretched across the streets around the town hall, on the pretext that he had been instructed to deposit there the arms of a militia company which he commands, and which he has been ordered to disarm. In reality this is for the purpose of permitting the troops of the Prince of Orange to gain access to the Town Hall. Alva consents, but says that as Karloo's company is disarmed, he too had best disarm, and bids him take the sword from his side and lay it on the table. This Karloo does, and withdraws.

Dolorès enters, craving a private audience with the Duke of Alva. She is crazed with fear; she is trembling lest Rysoor should discover that Karloo is her lover and kill him. Therefore, in order to prevent this, she has determined to betray the whole plot to Alva. She tells all the signals, and the fact that the peal at midnight from the bell-tower will be the signal for the entrance of the Prince's troops. She sees the sword of Karloo lying on the table; pointing to the knot of ribbon tied to the hilt, she says that it is a signal by which the conspirators are to recognize each other. This sword evidently belongs to one of the chiefs, she declares, and she bids Alva beware of him. Alva says threateningly that he will be taken care of. He then demands that she shall give him the names of all the conspirators. At first she resists, but, under threats of torture, she reveals them one by one, including her husband. At last she discovers that the sword which she has pointed out belongs to Karloo; although she has kept his name a secret, she realizes that he too, like the others, by her betrayal, is doomed to the scaffold.

The fifth scene is laid in the town hall of Brussels. A staircase leads up to the bell-tower. Rysoor and Karloo here meet, to complete the arrangements for the uprising at midnight. Rysoor sees that Karloo has no sword, and asks him why. Karloo tells him that the Duke of Alva

had deprived him of it. Rysoor goes to give him another, and Karloo extends his naked right hand to grasp it, when Rysoor utters a cry. He asks Karloo how he got the wound. In his confusion Karloo stammers that he had grappled at a sword in the hands of a Spaniard, but he realizes that he has betrayed his fearful secret. A terrible scene takes place between the two men, so lately and so long friends. At its close, Rysoor tells Karloo that his life is indispensable to the cause of their common country, and therefore he will spare it.

As the other conspirators enter, the two men, by their calm demeanor, betray nothing of the dreadful scene which has taken place between them. The hour of midnight approaches; a rapping is heard upon the door. On their refusal to open, it is broken in by a large force of Spaniards. The conspirators fall back as the Spaniards advance, dragging in Jonas, the bell-ringer, bound and gagged. The Duke of Alva follows; he summons the patriots to surrender, telling them that all is lost; he has discovered the entire plot, and is about to send Jonas, the bell-ringer, to the belfry, to sound the signal by which the Prince of Orange and his six thousand cavalry are to enter the city, where lies in wait for them a large force which will destroy them. He orders Jonas to climb up the bell-tower and ring the bell. The conspirators earnestly urge him not to do so, but he apparently yields to fear; he tells them that he has a wife and children, and that the Spaniards will kill them if he does not obey. With these words, his bonds are taken from him, and he starts up the stair. On either side of him is a Spanish soldier, with a pistol at his head. Minutes pass as the sound of the footsteps are heard climbing the steps. All listen with strained ears. The first sounds come from the bell, but it is not the festival peal of bells, it is the funeral knell which is heard. As the Duke of Alva looks up with a disturbed air, Karloo

cries to him, radiant with joy: "The bell-ringer is faithful. It is not the signal to enter, but the signal to flee. The Prince is saved!"

A shot is heard in the belfry. The sound of the bell suddenly stops. Again footsteps are heard on the stair. As the door to the bell-tower opens, four soldiers enter with their muskets improvised into a shoulder litter, on which they bear the bleeding body of Jonas, the bell-ringer. All the conspirators uncover their heads and kneel as the body is borne away.

The next scene is in a hall of the palace where sits the Council of Blood. A door opens on the right, leading to the torture chamber. The door to the left leads to the cabinet of the Duke of Alva. Here we find the tender side of this human tiger, Alva. He has an only daughter, Rafaela, who is far gone in consumption, and who is only kept alive from day to day by the skilled ministrations of his physician, Alberti. The doctor comes to tell Alva that five men are to be put to death that morning on the great square; the Duke, he says, had promised his daughter there should be no more executions; she has taken the bloody reign in Brussels so much to heart, that the doctor seriously fears the effects upon her health, if she knows of this new execution. Alva therefore bids him take his daughter and convey her in a closed litter to a convent without the walls, bringing her back only at nightfall, when the executions shall be completed. While they are talking, Dolorès enters, wild with fear for her lover. She has overheard the conversation; like a maniac, she demands of Alva freedom for Karloo, on the threat that she will shriek forth the truth on the instant, so loudly that Rafaela in the next room can hear her. Alva tries to temporize with her, but it is folly to argue with a woman crazed with love and fear. She is on the point of shrieking forth the dreadful fact of the execution, when he yields, to save his daughter from the excite-

ment, and grants Dolorès a pardon and a safe-conduct to Lille for Karloo and herself.

Rafaëla enters; she interrogates her father closely. Her suspicions are aroused. She makes him promise that there shall be no more massacres. This he does, and she takes her leave of him for the day.

When the room is empty Rysoor comes in, escorted by Captain Rincon and a squad of soldiers. Rysoor demands of Rincon whither he is being led and why he has been separated from his friends. Rincon replies that everything is over for the others, for they have been led to the stake, but that everything is not over for Rysoor. "And what do you mean?" asks Rysoor. "That room," says Rincon, pointing to the door, "will answer the question; it is the torture chamber." "Ah, then they think that I will speak?" cries Rysoor. "Yes," replies Rincon, sadly, "but if you fear that your body will yield when your soul will not, why not take your own life?" "Ah!" says Rysoor, "if I only had the means to do it." "Then," says Rincon, "do not utter a word, do not make a sound; we are watched, but as I am walking through the corridor with you toward the torture chamber, open your left hand. I shall be walking on that side, and I will give you what you need." Rysoor thanks him warmly, and the melancholy cortège takes up its march for the torture chamber.

The Council of Blood is now convened in the hall. A messenger suddenly announces that Karloo is liberated. Karloo demands to know by whose mysterious hand this clemency has been accorded to him, why he has been singled out from his fellow conspirators for mercy at the hands of Alva. But the Council tell him nothing; they cannot answer, for they know nothing. They cannot know that it is Dolorès who has succeeded in obtaining his pardon. Karloo dreads this shameful clemency; he knows that his friends will believe that he has betrayed them; he rages,

in his wild despair; he demands that he be taken to death with them. But the Councillors calmly tell him that their duty is to obey the orders of Alva, and they bid him depart unharmed. At this moment a messenger comes suddenly from the torture chamber, announcing that Count Rysoor is dead. The Chief Councillor demands with indignation why he was permitted to die, when he should have been tortured. The messenger replies that Rysoor had a poniard secreted on his person; plunging it suddenly into his heart, with the one word, "Patrie," he had died instantly. The messenger throws the bloody poniard on the table. Karloo asks the Councillors if they care for the dagger. They tell him no; he takes it and goes.

The seventh scene is in the great square of the city. Crowds of citizens, women, and children line the streets, evidently waiting for some one. The closed litter of Rafaela, Alva's daughter, appears, escorted by Dr. Alberti. It stops, the curtains open, and she insists on being told the cause of the crowds, the pale faces, and the rolling drums. Alberti assures her it is nothing but a review. She calls a passing officer, who happens to be Captain Rincon. He, too, on a sign from Alberti, assures her it is merely a military parade. Suddenly three blasts of a trumpet are heard, and a gorgeously apparelled herald appears. As the trumpet sounds cease, he cries: "In the name of the king, our mighty lord, and his excellency, the Duke of Alva, all the people of this city are bidden to be silent and to kneel as the rebels pass by. Do this under penalty of the rope. Glory to God and to the king!" Sullen murmurs are heard from the crowd, as the herald continues on his way, preceded by his escort.

Rafaela is again suspicious, and as her escort give her no satisfaction, she calls a little child from the roadside, saying, "Come here, little one. Have you come to see the soldiers?" And the child replies, "Yes, madam, and the

victims too. They are going to burn them alive in the middle of the square." The unfortunate daughter of the bloody Duke falls fainting into the arms of her women, and is carried into a shop, where her attendants surround the dying girl. Fitly for her passing, there comes the sound of muffled drums beating the funeral roll in the distance.

There now enters a military and religious pageant of great magnificence. A corps of halberdiers precede, driving the crowd to right and left with the butts of their halberds. Then come a drum corps beating the funeral roll. Following them are the Spanish musketeers, trumpeters, heralds, colour-bearers of Swiss, Lombard, Portuguese, Neapolitan, and German regiments, bailiffs of the Council of Blood, Councillors, judges, and last of all, under a canopy borne by lackeys in his livery, comes the Duke, followed by his pages and the people of his household. Behind him again come long lines of monks, chanting funeral hymns and carrying tall wax candles. At the funeral hymns, the lamentations of the women around the dying girl increase, and they attract Alva's attention. He bids one of the officers go to the shop, saying, "Vargas, why are those women weeping? I have forbidden women to weep in Brussels." Vargas returning says, "My lord, there is a death in that house. They are weeping over the body of a young girl." All of his aides uncover, including Alva, who is struck as he thinks of his own daughter, so near to death, little knowing it is she who is lying dead so few paces from him. He sighs and says, "Let them weep, Vargas. Let them weep over their daughter." He gives a sign and the procession again takes up its march. Behind the chanting monks come the conspirators, their hands bound, each man walking between two soldiers. As they appear, they see Karloo standing by the roadside gazing at this mournful scene. They break forth into bitter reproaches. They ask him what price he got for

selling them. They call him "traitor," "Judas," and heap curses on his head. They shake their bound hands at him, they strive to rush upon him, but are held back by the soldiers. The unfortunate wretch, writhing under their reproaches, and not knowing why he is free, can say nothing. Near him stands a French nobleman, who tells the unfortunate Karloo that the person who has denounced the conspirators is not a man but a woman; he does not know her name, but he had heard her that morning, in the Duke's palace, promise to betray the plot; for this she was given a safe conduct for Lille, together with another safe-conduct for a man whose name he did not hear.

The last scene takes place in the house of Rysoor, and it is between Karloo and Dolorès. She is imploring him to leave the fated city with her. She tells him she has resolved to flee, but he tells her he has sworn to Rysoor that he will find out who was the traitor, and were the culprit his dearest friend, he would kill him. Dolorès is stricken with terror, but she is all the more determined to take him away from the city, and tells him that it will be impossible for him ever to discover the culprit. He tells her he has already learned that the traitor is a woman. Even more terrified, she endeavors to get him to accompany her in her flight, and as they talk the muffled roll of the funeral drums is heard. It is the melancholy cortège approaching the house of Rysoor, which looks out upon the grand square where the execution is to take place. Karloo wavers—he almost yields—but he says to her, "How shall we escape?" She tells him that she has a safe-conduct and that it is, like his, for Lille. Karloo looks at her with suspicion. How does she know that he has a safe-conduct and that it is for Lille? He accuses her of betraying the plot. The unfortunate woman at first denies, but at last is forced to admit the damning truth. He drags her to the window. Already the funeral pile is

being fired. The flames are mounting. He points to the conspirators, but they have recognised him, and as the flames rise up around their bodies, above the crackle and roar of the flames are heard their curses and denunciations as they reproach Karloo with having betrayed them. He drags Dolorès to the window as she endeavours to writhe out of his grasp. He holds up her face to the sill, in order that her eyes might not be turned from the hideous spectacle, but that she may see the victims of her perfidy being burned to a cinder before her eyes. He plunges into her heart the bloody dagger so lately plucked from her husband's bosom. Then, as she falls back dead, he leaps from the window and falls on the stone pavement on the great square, a mangled and mutilated mass at the feet of his friends whom his paramour has betrayed.

DIVORÇONS¹

WHEN Sardou made a failure, or at least not a success, of his serious problem play, "Daniel Rochat," he was greatly irritated. In revenge, he determined to write a play which should be so trifling, and yet so humorous, that it would have an unqualified success. "I know my Parisians," said Sardou, cynically, "I know what they like," and he wrote "Divorçons." It certainly showed that he knew the Parisians, for the play proved to be one of his most profitable productions. Yet he was said in his heart of hearts to look upon it as being beneath his abilities. Still, if it were intended as a jesting rebuke to the Parisians for their lack of taste, it was a profitable jest to the playwright.

The play begins in the luxurious home of M. and Madame des Prunelles. They live in the smiling Champagne country; they are among the richest people in Rheims; but for the past two years they have been practically disunited, although they live together. What has brought about this unhappy condition of affairs? What is there to account for the complaints of Cyprienne? Henri des Prunelles when he married, on nearing forty, yearned after a quiet and reposeful life, while his young bride, Cyprienne, dreamed of tumultuous passions and intoxicating loves. Cyprienne is of that type of young woman whose imagination has been fed entirely on romantic novels. She is unhappy. She concludes that her marriage is a failure, that her life is wrecked and ruined, and that the only remedy is divorce.

¹Best-known English versions, "The Queen's Proctor," "Divorçons."

The truth is that this handsome young matron is utterly bored in her luxurious home in the rich Champagne country. Being bored, she thinks that it is marriage that bores her, and as her foolish head is filled with even more foolish novels, she gets to dreaming about unattainable heroes. Thinking so much of these visionary gentry, she finally picks out a flesh-and-blood one, who happens to be a cousin of her husband. His name is Adhémar. He fills the modest position of a forest ranger. Although thus a Government official, his only advantage is that he has the privilege of exhibiting himself to the sentimental Cyprienne, every now and then, in a beautiful green uniform laced with silver, and wearing high patent-leather jack-boots. In the eyes of Cyprienne, this dashing attire naturally eclipses the plain coats and trousers of her husband Henri.

Henri, who is a keen-witted husband, notices with growing disquietude the conduct of Adhémar. He knows that as yet matters are more sentimental than suspicious, and he tells his friend and confidant, Clavignac, that he has two sufficient guarantees of his present security. "The first," says he, "is that Cyprienne treats me like a dog. The very day that she becomes amiable toward me, I shall begin to fear. The second is that Cyprienne takes a remarkable interest in the labors of a parliamentary commission, which is working on the passage of a contemplated divorce law. This would render it possible for French husbands and wives to shake off their shackles when they have made bad matches."

From the two facts that he points out, des Prunelles is certain that his wife is still faithful. None the less, being an inventive husband, with a strong taste for mechanics, he arranges mechanical safeguards. He has a work-shop where he spends his time in turning napkin-rings, repairing clocks, mending door-bells, and busying himself with the thousand minute details requiring attention in a household.

He has therefore conceived the idea of attaching to the side-door of the conservatory, where the gallant Adhémar is in the habit of paying his visits to Cyprienne, a secret spring, which makes an electric bell sound in his workshop. Henceforth, to the amazement of the lover, whenever he makes his clandestine visits to the lady, the husband suddenly appears, greets him with effusive cordiality, and fairly welcomes him out of the house.

But this state of affairs cannot continue indefinitely. There is danger in the air. Adhémar is about to leave for another provincial city, where he expects promotion. But he pretends to Cyprienne that he will refuse his desired promotion in order to have the privilege of remaining near her. As a matter of fact, Adhémar is playing false with the wife, as well as with the husband. His secret intention is to leave Rheims, as formerly the heathen gods left frail but beautiful ladies, and triumphantly mounted to Olympus. The wavering condition in which he finds the sentimental Cyprienne inspires the dashing Adhémar with this cunning idea: as the divorce law has just reached the point where it is expected to come to a vote in the legislative chamber in a day or two, he gets a friend who is in a government office to send him a false telegram, announcing that the divorce law has been passed by a large majority. This good news causes the scruples of Cyprienne to vanish, and she is about to yield to the importunities of her lover when the husband detects his danger, and suspecting that the telegram is false, determines to take steps to put Adhémar's nose out of joint and reconquer his wife. Changing at once his tone and his language, he writes a friendly letter to Adhémar inviting him to come to his house for an urgent communication. While awaiting a reply, he lays before his astonished wife a plan which puts her husband in a new light. "My dear," he says, "knowing that we are about to be separated from one another and on the verge of being

free, let us have no more constraint. Let us act as if we were simply good friends, just like two good fellows." At this unexpected remark, Cyprienne is overjoyed. She throws her arms around her husband's neck, hugs him, and says: "Are we going to be separated? How nice of you!" This auspicious opening naturally leads to confidences, and des Prunelles obtains exact details concerning the degree of intimacy to which Adhémar had attained. The husband is gratified to find that his wife has been guilty of nothing but imprudence, coquetry, and a little too much freedom in words. "You know, it is so slow in the country," says she, naïvely.

Adhémar arrives. Des Prunelles gravely announces to him the approaching dissolution of their marriage bonds. "My dear friend," he adds, "you love Cyprienne. I withdraw all my pretensions to her, and I give you my full permission to marry her at once, as soon as the legal preliminaries are arranged." "But, but, but," stammers the young gallant, "I had not hoped that my pretensions would reach such a point." "But you would be wrong not to take advantage of this opportunity," replies des Prunelles coldly. "A pretty woman, with 400,000 francs fortune, is not to be sneezed at. I know that you have only 2,600 francs a year for a salary. It is also true that she has been in the habit of spending 60,000 francs a year on her gowns. I am aware that the income from her fortune is only 22,000 francs, and that you will have to make up the other 40,000 yourself out of your 2,600. But if you cut her down in milliner's bills, in carriages, and in horses, you may be able to make both ends meet. When you need advice, command me. I will give you the best I can."

Adhémar, on reflection, thinks that perhaps the affair is not such a bad one. But the fair Cyprienne, generally sentimental, becomes extremely thoughtful. The husband tactfully retires, leaving them in this frame of mind, after

having invited Adhémar to dinner. This gentleman is so struck with the lady's dowry that his love, so lately passionate, is now changing into a contemplative affection. For the moment his thoughts are preoccupied by gratitude toward the husband. He even feels so much under obligation to him that he points out to Cyprienne his delicate position—that so long as she remains the wife of that friend and worthy gentleman, he can offer her no familiarities or caresses, but will treat her with the utmost respect. "Respect?" says Cyprienne, who has been put very much out of countenance by the prosaic nature of her love affair. "Respect? How funny! Why, since it isn't wrong, it isn't at all interesting any more."

While Adhémar has completely forgotten his lady's eyes, in thinking of her large fortune, she has temporarily withdrawn, and des Prunelles reappears. He is in evening clothes, and has his crush hat in his hand. His wife looks at him in surprise. "Are you not to dine with us?" "No," he replies; "you are going to dine tête-à-tête with Adhémar." "And where are you going to dine?" "I? I am going to dine at the café." "Alone?" The husband smiles: "Perhaps alone—perhaps with a friend." Cyprienne looks at him fixedly. "I will wager you are going to dine with some woman," she cries.

Cyprienne falls into a fit of violent jealousy. When the husband sees that he has her in a proper frame of mind, he says: "Do you wish to be certain that I am not going to dine with some woman? Then come and dine with me." "At the café, in a private room?" she asks. "Yes." "Indeed, indeed, I will! Oh, what a jolly time we shall have." "But," says the husband, "how about Adhémar?" She replies, "Adhémar? Oh, let him go to the mischief! Let him dine by himself." The bell rings, the servant enters, and announces Adhémar; but Cyprienne, seizing her husband by the arm, says to him: "Come, quick, he may

catch us," and her maid-servant falls stupefied in a chair, as she sees M. and Madame des Prunelles slipping off together like two lovers. When Adhémar enters, judge of his amazement when he learns that his lady love has gone out. When her maid, at her wit's end to find an excuse, says that Madame has gone to see her sick aunt, Adhémar is disgusted and surprised. "Fibs already!" he cries.

While Henri and Cyprienne are dining in a private room at the café, the gay lothario Adhémar is running from one end of the city to the other, looking for Cyprienne's several aunts. There is a torrential rain-storm. He is drenched. Water is streaming out of his hat, his coat-tails, his boots; his umbrella is turned inside out, and he finally appears, grotesque, ridiculous, and sneezing from a violent cold in the head. He brings a Commissary of Police to safeguard his marital rights. This is based on a provision of the French law, by which a husband may secure a Commissary of Police to make an official visit where he has reason to believe his wife is in a position reflecting on his conjugal honour. When the lover implores the law officer to declare the presence of husband and wife, in the private room of a restaurant, to be contrary to his rights, the situation becomes extremely ludicrous.

The play closes with Henri and Cyprienne turned lovers again, and the discomfiture of Adhémar—a most unusual situation on the French stage.

LA HAINE

THE historical background which Sardou chose for "La Haine" lends itself to the madness of furious love and savage hate. He placed his scene in the fourteenth century, amid those little Italian republics which struggled so bitterly against each other and against themselves. This play reveals more of the obscure and bloody annals of those republics than one could find in the pages of Sismondi.

In 1369 the little Republic of Sienna was divided into two factions, Guelphs and Ghibellines, the common people against the aristocrats, the followers of the Emperor against the followers of the Pope, the poor against the rich. Such was the internal condition of this model republic, while the Emperor of Germany and the ruler of Rome hung upon the factions' flanks like brigands while they were cutting one another's throats. Nevertheless, illumined by some sudden return of reason, the two factions of Sienna arranged a truce, and came to an understanding. They agreed to stand together against their common enemy, the Emperor of Germany, Charles IV.

It is on the eve of this great day, coinciding with the nativity of the Virgin, September 8, 1369, that the play begins. Fighting is going on in the country. The proscribed Guelphs of Sienna are returning in force, accompanied by squads of German allies, under the leadership of Orso Savagnana, son of a wool-carder. Orso is a popular hero, half tribune, half soldier. He had dared one day, in the streets of Sienna, to throw a wreath of flowers to Cordelia Saracini, as she was leaning from the balcony of her palace. Cordelia is one of the haughtiest girls in the city, sister of two Ghibelline nobles, Ercole and Giugurta Saracini. She hurls back the wreath into the face

of the Guelph artisan, adding to the insult bitter and stinging words on his plebeian birth. From this springs the hatred—"La Haine"—which gives the play its name.

The sound of battle comes nearer. The Ghibellines are weakening, while the victorious Guelphs have fought their way as far as a barricade situated in front of the Saracini palace. A man mounts on the barricade. It is Orso. A woman appears on the balcony. It is Cordelia. "Woman," cries Orso imperiously, "bid your lackeys open this portal." "It is not the time," replies Cordelia, defiantly, "to open gates when thieves are in the city streets." "Have at you then!" cries the exasperated Orso. He gives the signal for the assault. The walls are scaled. Orso and his band penetrate into the palace. But death would not be bitter enough for the unfortunate Cordelia. Instead of hurling her from the window into the street, as the howling mob demands, Orso drags her, half strangled, into the interior of the palace, and there accomplishes on her his hideous vengeance.

Despite their apparent triumph, the Guelphs are masters of only half the city. Many men have fallen on both sides. Among the dead Ghibellines is Andreino, a boy of fifteen, son to Uberta, the old nurse of Cordelia. The Ghibellines demand a truce, to care for the wounded and bury the dead. These brave soldiers delight in carnage, but they fear pestilence. The palace of the Saracini is a fiery furnace. Has Cordelia perished in the flames? This is the question which the brothers Saracini ask. The response is not long in coming. Cordelia is living, but if she is not dead by her own hand, it is only because she thirsts for vengeance first. But vengeance upon whom? She knows not the name of her outrager; she has not seen his face; she knows only his voice.

In the great square before the grand cathedral, Guelphs and Ghibellines are drawn up on two sides of the rectangle.

Each faction has ostensibly come to assist at the solemn mass for the nativity of the Virgin. But although they have come presumably to pray, they are just about to fall upon each other in bloody fray, when the great doors of the cathedral open, and Archbishop Azzelino appears on the marble steps. He solemnly adjures them: "Men of Sienna, is this what you call a truce in honor of the Virgin? The church belongs to God. Let all who are Christian men lay down their arms, or the doors which I will close to them living, I shall open only to their dead bodies." Thus threatened with excommunication, the Guelphs and the Ghibellines lower their arms and enter the cathedral, each faction by a door to right and left, while the solemn chants of the monks break forth from within.

Orso during this scene has uttered but one word, yet Cordelia has heard him, and she follows into the church the group of men, from among whom has come the sound of the voice she abhors.

The next scene is a cloister, occupied by Guelphs and German soldiers as a barrack. While Cordelia is seeking for the despoiler of her honour, Uberta learns by chance the name of the man who has killed her son, Andreino. It is Orso who violated the virgin sister of the Saracini. It is Orso who slew Andreino, the young son of Uberta. The two women dispute over the privilege of revenge, but Cordelia has her way. Uberta entreats her, saying: "Oh, Cordelia, my nursling, cherished by my milk, I pray you let me kill him!" But Cordelia replies: "No, not you, Uberta. It is my privilege. You are weeping only for a death, while I am mourning for my life, which is my honour."

Springing out from behind a file of soldiers, Cordelia strikes deep with the poniard. Orso reels—he falls to the ground, the blood flowing from a deep wound in his throat. Amid the shock of the battle which has suddenly begun,

his men bear him away, still breathing, and lay him in the shadow of the church door. When the soldiers have gone Cordelia and Uberta return, to assure themselves of the certainty of their vengeance. But they find the body gone. "Can it be that he is only wounded?" asks Uberta. "Just God!" cries Cordelia, "grant that he may be dead."

In the square, in front of the church, Cordelia at last finds the body for which she has been looking. When she sees the work of her bloody dagger, the immense miracle of feminine pity descends upon her, and she gives water to the parched lips of the once strong man who now feebly begs for assistance. When the ferocious Uberta approaches, turning over corpses in order to find that of the man who had slain her son, Cordelia hides the body of her outrager from the view of the vindictive nurse.

After Cordelia has temporarily hidden Orso from Uberta, who would finish the wounded man without remorse, she conceals him in an unfrequented portion of the Saracini palace. Giugurta, her brother, being among the vanquished, is obliged to flee from the city. He wishes to leave the palace by the gardens, but in order to reach them, he must pass through the chamber where the wounded Orso lies. Cordelia endeavours to restrain him—with such persistence that Uberta has her suspicions aroused, and a violent scene takes place between Cordelia and her nurse, in which the latter discovers the truth. Cordelia asks her for mercy, and in the name of her young son, she begs the sorrowing mother not to offer up a bloody sacrifice to the youth who she hopes has become an angel in heaven. Suddenly Uberta cries, "Hush! there is your brother." It is apparent that, like the outraged noblewoman, the plebeian mother also has pardoned Orso. Giugurta is forced to flee by a dangerous road, and is soon arrested by the Guelph troops stationed outside the city.

Cordelia and Orso find themselves face to face. At the

sound of the name "Cordelia," he recognises not only his victim, but also the chamber where, in the intoxication of vengeance and victory, he committed his cowardly and odious crime. The two images succeed one another in his memory, the woman who poniarded him, and the woman who saved him by giving him water when he was dying of thirst. These two women are but one, and that one his victim. His repentance breaks forth.

"Cordelia, it is my duty to wipe away the stain upon your honour."

"To make me your wife? Alas, if it were only I against whom you had sinned, but what have you done to your country, O Guelph?"

"Ah, this unholy war," he replies. "I curse it, as you do, but it is your work and mine. Yes, it was you,—you from that balcony and I from the barricade,—you gave the signal for the frightful war. It is our hate which has brought on the war, so let our love subdue it. This city, which like you has been outraged and soiled by me, I will pluck from despair, and like you, I will lift it up."

"But will you dare to propose peace-making to your Guelph comrades?"

"Yes, I will promise them anything," says Orso, "but let me know that you will pardon me."

"Go," replies Cordelia, "I have blushed for you—now let me see if I can be proud of you. You have been a bandit, be now a hero. Then it will be soon enough to talk to me of your love."

Next we see, in the ruins of the old municipal palace, the Ghibelline prisoners, among whom is Giugurta Saracini. They are about to be put to death. Orso appears amid the acclamations of the populace, who rejoice over his apparent resurrection from the dead. He addresses the people: "People of Sienna," he cries, "the Emperor Charles IV. is about to lay siege to our city. He demands that you shall

give him 50,000 golden florins to retreat. I propose that he shall give us 60,000 florins to be permitted to depart in peace."

Cries come back from the crowd: "Orso, you are mad! We have not sufficient troops."

"You are mistaken," replies Orso. "If you wish, I will raise for you an army in a day. You ask how? I answer, let us throw open our prison doors, release our captives, and together, Guelphs and Ghibellines, we will march shoulder to shoulder against the foreign tyrant."

This proposal raises a storm. Orso is insulted and denounced as a traitor, but he maintains his firm attitude, and soon wins the approval of the fickle crowd. The prison doors are thrown open, the chains are stricken from the limbs of the Ghibellines, and the citizens, enemies hitherto but friends now, go forth side by side to fight the foreign hordes.

A brief word passes between the lovers. "Is this the task you wished of me, Cordelia?"

"Yes," replies Cordelia, and she murmurs words which fall sweetly on Orso's ear.

This colloquy between the lovers is overheard by Giugurta, and he says to Cordelia grimly: "We shall speak of this after the battle."

The last scene is laid in the interior of the great cathedral. The Emperor Charles has been defeated and is in retreat. The army of Sienna has returned to the city. Cordelia, terrified by the threats of her brother, has taken refuge in the cathedral as a sanctuary. Giugurta has joined her there. His patrician pride drives him into a frenzy, as he, the eldest of the house of Saracini, learns from his sister's lips the story of her shame. "So that is why you barred the way between me, me your brother, and liberty. You betrayed me to save your lover, a wretch, a workman, a fellow of the street." He is about to kill Cordelia as he

has killed Uberta, her accomplice, but he recoils from the idea of shedding blood in a church. Cordelia has fainted on the steps of the high altar; although he shudders at the idea of stabbing her there, he does not hesitate to pour between her lips a vial of poison.

The people enter. The returning soldiers of Sienna, with Orso at their head, are about to chant a *Te Deum* before the high altar. But as they approach, they see the white-clad form of Cordelia, writhing in convulsions on the altar steps. "It is the plague, the black death!" shouts a young monk. The crowd falls back in terror, all but Orso—he seizes Cordelia in his arms; thus he has decided to share her death. By the laws of the republic, the plague-stricken are separated from the world; the doors of the church are closed upon them, not to be opened until after their death. But before the citizens abandon the unfortunate lovers the Archbishop Azzelino extends his hands and gives them his episcopal blessing. They shall be united before God.

When the vast church is emptied of all save themselves, the two lovers exchange farewells full of hope. Orso, wounded, is repentant, and they die in each other's arms, exchanging, as they bid farewell to life, their first and last kiss.

LA FAMILLE BENOÎTON¹

THE point in this play that strikes the reader is the timeliness of the subject. "La Famille Benoiton" was produced November 18, 1865. It was in the heyday of the Second Empire—when the third Napoleon was at the height of his glory—immediately before the great Exposition, when the rebuilt Paris of Baron Haussmann was dazzling strangers from all over the world—when the great fortunes amassed by the successful speculators of the time were being squandered in luxury and dissipation. Such was the extravagance of the new-rich, both men and women, that it was the target of pen and pencil. The satirical journals of the day swarm with jests levelled at rich men's sons, at horsey heiresses, at the fast society men and women who were found gambling at Trouville, betting at Biarritz, and running racing stables at Longchamps. The subject of fashionable frivolity was in the air. Already several dramatists had coquetted with it. One was M. Dumanoir in his "Toilettes Tapageuses." Another was Henri Meilhac, who in "Les Curieuses" discussed the subject of feminine frivolity and extravagance in not too delicate a manner.

Sardou saw in the subject good material for a play: he decided to build it around a bourgeois father, suddenly enriched in business, who believes in "up-to-date" methods in educating his children. The results are shown in the slangy, jaunty, and horsey Benoiton girls and what befalls them. This bourgeois father is M. Benoiton, who has achieved fortune originally as a successful mattress-maker, and subsequently by speculations on the Bourse.

¹ Best-known English version entitled "A Fast Family."

The play begins in the villa of the Benoîtsons, in one of the pretty suburbs near Paris. There are several villas there, separated not by walls, as is usual in France, but by ornamental hedges, which make them in a way more neighbourly than is customary. One of the villas adjacent to that of the Benoîtsons is occupied by Mme. Clotilde, a wealthy spinster, both witty and wise. Perhaps her main fault is her desire to marry people—other people: not herself—she is too wise for that. She has on her hands an old maid, Adolphine, whom she has despaired of marrying off, and the first scene is a dialogue between the two, in which much of the plot of the play is set forth.

There suddenly appears a cousin of Clotilde's, a Viscount de Champrosé, who has stumbled on her villa through pursuing at breakneck speed a pretty face framed in the window of a carriage. Being a frank cousin, he explains to Clotilde how he came to drop in upon her, and she conjectures that the face belongs to one of the pretty Benoiton girls, and tells him the history of the family.

One of the daughters, Martha, is married. Her husband, Didier, is a successful business man, who commits the blunder of devoting himself entirely to business and neglecting his wife. In consequence, his wife devotes herself entirely to fashions and frivolity, and neglects him. She is foolish enough to take to gambling at fashionable watering-places. While at Dieppe she loses at a gambling salon, and is unable to pay her stake; the croupier and the players are all expectantly looking at her, and she is crimson with mortification, when a stranger whispers to her, "Madame, will you permit me to lend you the trifle you need?" With this, he places the requisite stake upon the table, puts her arm in his, and leads her from the gaming table. She learns that the gentleman to whom she is indebted is the Viscount de Champrosé. She keeps this a secret from her husband, and subsequently saves up her

pin-money until she has enough to pay the debt. She meets the Viscount by appointment in the Tuileries Garden, and gives him the money. This is their last meeting.

The Viscount falls in love with the third daughter, Jeanne. He determines to present his suit to her father, but the vulgarity of old Benoiton appalls him, as well as the discovery that Benoiton is the man who has purchased the ancient Champrosé château and estates, and that he is thinking seriously of utilizing the Viscount's ancestral portraits and baptizing them all Benoîtons. He is further dismayed to learn that his prospective father-in-law is a mattress-maker. Even with all these drawbacks, he is so much infatuated with the beauty and vivacity of Jeanne that he would still attempt to make her his wife, but he is alarmed at her frivolity, her recklessness, and her slang. But his cousin Clotilde assures him that the girl has a good heart, and endeavours to further the match.

The second daughter, Camille, is sought in marriage by a M. Prudent Formichel, son of the capitalist Formichel, who is a friend of the elder Benoiton. M. Prudent is prudence personified, and thinks only of his future wife's dowry. She is secretly loved by her cousin Stéphen, a clerk, and elopes with him. The elder Benoiton moves heaven and earth to get hold of the errant daughter before the marriage can take place, and in the meantime M. Prudent increases the size of the dowry he expects. He was to have had 200,000 francs with the lady. He informs the father that if she is not returned before the next morning he must have 300,000 francs, and if she remains away over night the price will be 400,000 francs.

In the meantime, Adolphine, the old maid, suspects the existence of an acquaintance between Champrosé and Martha. She investigates, finds suspicious circumstances, and tells the whole story to Didier, the husband. He is shocked and horrified; he believes that his wife is false to

him, and that their child is not his, but Champrosé's. They have had a quarrel that very morning, as he has refused to give her 5000 francs for some lace which she wanted. Angered at his parsimony, as she calls it, she orders and pays for the lace, which is sent home with the receipted bill. The husband is there when it arrives. He opens it, finds the receipt, and demands to know where she got the money. The unfortunate woman hesitates, and lies. She says she borrowed it from her father that morning. At that very moment old Benoiton enters. The husband accosts him with, "Here are the 5000 francs my wife borrowed from you." But Benoiton stares in surprise, replying that she borrowed no money from him and he has not seen her for several days. Thereupon the infuriated Didier turns upon his wife, accusing her of having received the money from Champrosé, who is promptly challenged by him to a duel. Clotilde begs Champrosé not to fight. He says he must, as an honourable man, but until his last breath he will assure the husband that he never met his wife. Before the duel he confides to Clotilde a small package of letters, which he says are from Martha to him; if he falls in the duel, Clotilde must destroy them. With that he leaves the room, and Didier enters. He sees the letters; he notices Clotilde's agitation; he taxes her with knowledge of the intrigue of Martha and Champrosé; he demands that she show him the signature of one of the letters to prove to him that they are not by his wife. Driven to extremity, Clotilde throws the letters into the fire, thereby confirming his belief that they are by his wife. When Martha learns this, she bitterly reproaches Clotilde, telling her that the letters were simply business documents touching the repayment of a loan; that they proved her complete innocence; that she was about to send to Champrosé, telling him to give them to her husband; that

now, as all proof of her innocence is destroyed, her husband will leave her, and her life is wrecked.

The two unhappy spouses are finally brought together by the grave illness of their daughter. She is at the point of death. Clotilde tells the news to Didier and Champrosé at the same time, bidding Didier watch Champrosé's face. There is nothing on the Viscount's countenance but modified regret. "Do you think that a father would look like that when told of the impending death of his child?" she asks of Didier. Clotilde finally brings the couple together by the bedside of their child, and they are reunited. It is needless to state that Jeanne marries Champrosé, and that Cousin Stéphen marries Camille. Cousin Clotilde thus succeeds in marrying everybody—everybody, that is, except Adolphine.

DANIEL ROCHAT

THE play begins at Ferney, near the Swiss frontier, in the villa made famous by Voltaire. The one hundredth anniversary of the death of that great writer is about to be celebrated. All are looking forward to an address by the celebrated orator, Daniel Rochat, a French deputy, and one of the leaders of free thought in France. But Daniel Rochat is late. It is only known from the newspapers that he has been travelling in Switzerland for the past three weeks, incognito, accompanying two sisters, young Anglo-American ladies, Lea and Esther Henderson. At least such is the account given by Daniel himself to his secretary and confidant, Dr. Bidache, one of those go-betweens in whose dexterous hands even the most powerful politician at times becomes a plaything, and at other times a productive investment.

Daniel Rochat has met the two American ladies by chance. He has fallen in love with the elder, Lea. He has not yet declared his love, and Lea does not know the true name and identity of her chance acquaintance. She seems devoid of narrow prejudice, and generous in praise of liberty of speech and thought, as becomes a daughter of free America. But Daniel asks himself, may not this American heiress become affrighted at the name and fame of Rochat? For Daniel Rochat is not a free-thinker merely, he is the adversary of all superstitions, the foe of all religions for, to him, religion and superstition mean the same thing. In a word, Daniel Rochat is an ardent atheist.

The hour for the oration has come. Daniel pronounces an eloquent discourse before the bust of Voltaire, and it is thus that the veil of his incognito is lifted for Lea. Fascinated and subjugated by the eloquence of Daniel, she

listens first to his public speech, and then to a more private one in which she accepts, with the declaration of his love, the offer of his hand and heart.

In the second act, all the personages of the play are in the little city of Versoix, upon the lake of Geneva. At first they are in the house of Mrs. Powers, the aunt of the Henderson sisters; and subsequently we find them in the country-house of one of her neighbours, a Swiss savant, M. Guillaume Fargis.

This romantic marriage, so suddenly determined upon, is to be celebrated at once, for Daniel has been urgently summoned to Paris by his political friends to take part in an important debate in the Chamber of Deputies. His presence is considered absolutely indispensable. Daniel is very happy. He has not thought it necessary to discuss with Lea or her aunt the particular form of the wedding ceremony; to him they both seem devoid of all attachment to vain religious ceremonies, hence he is confident there can be no occasion for disagreement on this point. He arranges to have the Mayor of Versoix come to the house of Mrs. Powers to carry out the legal forms of the civil marriage, according to the Swiss code. While the documents are being filled out a very worldly conversation is going on among the guests who are present for the wedding; at the same time a rather frivolous young American lady, Miss Arabella Bloomfield, is playing on the piano a brilliant Hungarian melody. In fact, this civil marriage is utterly devoid of solemnity. Lea herself signs the legal documents with such an indifferent air as to astonish the French and Swiss persons present.

Daniel takes her hands and expresses his profound joy. "My dearest love, I was right in saying that this ceremony should take place quickly."

"*Ceremony?*" exclaims Lea, in surprise. "Ceremony! oh! you mean the signing of the documents, I suppose?"

At this moment there enters a stranger—a solemn person, severely clad in garb of sober black, with a white neckcloth.

"Who is this gentleman?" asks Rochat.

"Did not my aunt tell you?" replies Lea, tranquilly. "This is Mr. Clarke, our pastor, who is to marry us at the church."

Daniel is overwhelmed. He finds himself threatened with a religious ceremony, for Lea's reply is most precise. Although she has signed the documents brought by the Mayor, she does not believe in the civil or legal ceremony, and does not consider herself married.

After the wedding luncheon, during which Daniel is gravely preoccupied, he holds a consultation with his friend Fargis and Dr. Bidache. Fargis wisely counsels Daniel to go to the church and be married, since Lea wishes it. But Bidache opposes this vigorously. "It would be impossible," says he, "for Daniel to enter a house of worship to be married. His opinions, his writings, his speeches, his past and his future—all forbid it. His constituency would mock at him." Daniel agrees with Bidache. Fargis, however, insists that he must yield, and adds: "Do not commit in your own household the unpardonable fault that you have committed elsewhere. Do not raise the religious question in your family." But Daniel is decided. He replies: "I must make no concessions. The church holds our wives in its leading strings. It controls them. It is time that such men as I should give the church notice that we control our wives."

It speedily becomes evident that Daniel does not realise the importance which Lea attaches to the religious ceremony. He asks her to grant him an interview, in which he lays before her his wishes. At first Lea is astonished. She does not understand him. But when she does understand, she flatly refuses to accede to his request. She is the

daughter of an English father and an American mother, and she possesses the instincts of the two nations. Like Daniel, she believes in freedom, but she believes in Christian and not infidel freedom.

These two opposing natures become aggravated by contradiction. When Daniel places himself in absolute negation, Lea endeavours all the more to lift him to the spiritual regions of hope and faith. A rupture seems inevitable. At last the storm bursts. Daniel publicly refuses to accompany Lea to the church, and Lea refuses to follow him to his home, affirming that she does not consider him as her husband before God. There is no course left for Daniel but to retire, threatening to make good his legal rights.

But by the time that evening has come, Daniel is so unhappy that he pleads for an interview. Lea, however, by reason of the lateness of the hour, refuses to grant him an interview until the morning. Daniel then introduces himself, clandestinely, into Lea's apartments. The husband, mad with love and passion, endeavours to make her yield herself to him as his wife, his true, his veritable wife, with all that word implies. Lea feels her danger, she struggles against it, but she also feels an ardent desire to give herself to her husband-lover. Even in the midst of their delirium of passion the discordance of their sentiments appears.

"Rest in my arms," cries Daniel, "here on my heart, my dearest love, and I will make my love for you the only religion of our life."

But Lea replies: "Do not blaspheme, Daniel. There can be no true love without God."

"But," pleads Daniel, "you see that there can be such a love, since I love you dearly." But Lea still resists him. "Ah, you do not love me!" cries Daniel.

"Not *love* you?" she exclaims. "*I* not love you? Ah, Daniel, yours is only an earthly love. You love, and when death comes all is over; but for me, this earthly life of

love is not all; I desire you with the love of eternity. I desire you not only here on earth, but after this life is over. Yet you say that I do not love you! You speak of your poor, short, earthly love, and compare it with mine—with *my* love, which hopes to be eternal, with *my* love, which has wings!"

Daniel, half vanquished, and dazzled with the mysterious obscurity of the nuptial chamber, which he sees through the half-closed doors, at last gives way, and consents to be married before the pastor, Mr. Clarke, in whose neighbouring house the lights are still shining. They are to be married without witnesses. Lea consents to this, but Daniel demands more—he demands that their religious marriage shall remain a secret.

But Lea refuses. "What? That I shall conceal the fact that I am espoused to you before God, conceal it as a shame? Do you think that I would associate myself with such a cowardly lie? Never! Deny your faith, if you will, I shall boast of mine."

All is over. Daniel refuses to yield, and leaves Lea fainting on the floor.

On the following day the family and friends have come to the conclusion that the unendurable situation must be brought to an end. Dr. Bidache has discovered that, by the Federal law of Switzerland, divorce can be granted for so grave a cause as religious variance which might impair the conjugal tie. For a time Daniel still hopes that they may succeed in overcoming the difficulty, but neither will yield. It is too late. The charm is broken. Lea understands at last that she has been mistaken about Daniel, and she believes that Daniel has been mistaken about her. The divorce takes place, and the curtain falls upon disunited lovers.

MADAME SANS-GÊNE

IN 1893 took place the first production of "Mme. Sans-Gêne." For some time there had been tokens of a First Empire craze. The taste of the day was inclining to Napoleonic literature, drama, furniture, pictures—everything, in fact, of the period so long out of favour. Whether this was due to the exhuming of long-buried memoirs of the Empire times, or whether these memoirs were brought to light because of the Empire fad, are open questions. Intense interest had been aroused by the publication of the memoirs of Baron de Marbot, one of the dashing young generals of Napoleon. At about this time, also, there were published a number of books concerning the private life of Napoleon and his family, based upon letters and other documents not before published. Among these were the many volumes of Masson, Biagi, Lévy, Jung, Vandal, and others.

The stage was feeling the effects of this Napoleonic wave. At the Ambigu, Henri Fouquier had produced a Napoleon play, and the scenes in which the great Emperor, his hands behind his back, stands silently watching his soldiers march past, were received with great enthusiasm. At the Château D'Eau, a piece called "Mme. La Maréchale"—which treated of much the same group of characters and incidents as "Mme. Sans-Gêne"—ran to full houses for over a hundred nights.

At last Sardou produced a play with a Napoleonic setting. It speedily eclipsed all its rivals, and was the only play of the Empire times which was produced in foreign countries. It has been said of "Madame Sans-Gêne" that it is merely "an historic vaudeville." Yet it is painted on an enormous canvas and contains some fifty rôles. On the first production its settings were so sumptuous that there

were not wanting those who said that its success was due to the costumer, the scene painter, and the stage manager. But the stage manager was Sardou himself, and he had much to do with preparing even the scenes and the decorations.

The playwright designedly cast his piece on spectacular lines. There is no reason why a play should not please the eye as well as the ear, and "Madame Sans-Gêne" was a delight to several senses. Sardou never considered his work done when he had finished the text of his play. To him a play was not only a literary work, but a living, palpitating thing. The dialogue he looked upon as if it were a skeleton, which must be clothed with the flesh of action before the play could live. Long before the first rehearsal he saw the gestures, the movements, and the groupings of the players; he saw the decorations, the costumes, and the accessories of the stage. In his eyes these were elements of the drama as vital as the dialogue. Hence his success with the fifty characters and the enormous canvas of "Madame Sans-Gêne." Had he not possessed this peculiar gift of materializing his plays as he was writing them, this particular piece would have been nothing but a succession of historical tableaux loosely bound together.

In the play "Madame Sans-Gêne" is the sobriquet of Catherine Hubscher, a handsome laundress of the Rue St. Anne. The first act takes place in her laundry on the terrible 10th of August, 1792. Danton and his mad rabble of Marseillais are taking the Tuileries. From time to time the boom of cannon is heard, and the swarm of pretty laundresses shiver with terror at their ironing tables. Catherine is talking with one of her customers, a certain M. Fouché, a gentleman who for the nonce has no other occupation than that of making inflammatory speeches at political clubs. From his conversation we learn that the patriots are be-

sieging the Tuileries, and that Sergeant Lefebvre, the lover of Madame Sans-Gêne, is with them.

The departure of customers and laundresses has left Catherine alone. While she is still bolting and barring doors and shutters a young Austrian officer, Count Neipperg, hotly pursued, wounded and bleeding, craves entrance at her door and begs her to hide him. Catherine is good-hearted and impulsive. She is moved to pity by the young man's desperate peril, and she hides him in her bedroom. At this moment a loud knocking is heard at the shutters. It is Lefebvre with his powder-stained comrades. The sergeant warmly greets his sweetheart, and asks leave to go into her chamber to wash his blackened hands. She hesitates. He is surprised to find the door locked. It arouses his suspicion; in his jealous rage he forces the door, goes in, and immediately emerges, saying: "You were right—there is no one there—you only wished to give me a lesson for my absurd jealousy." But when his comrades have gone he says: "Why did you not tell me that the man in there is dead?" When she hears this, Catherine's emotion is so evidently that of mere pity for a stricken stranger that Lefebvre is at once reassured. The man, he tells her, is not dead, but only desperately wounded. He shall be permitted to escape, and Lefebvre will never again be jealous of his Catherine.

In this prologue we learn incidentally that Catherine had once done washing for a little Corsican lieutenant, bearing the queer name of Buonaparte, who had just been retired from the army. He was so poor that he could not pay his laundry bill, therefore she had let it go unpaid. The famous Fouché in this prologue appears so frank a rascal that we are almost tempted to forgive him his rascality for his frankness. So with the powder-stained patriots who, outnumbering the king's body guard a hundred to one, have just massacred them and sacked the Tuileries, they have

such a patriotic air withal over their plundering that they, too, are delightful.

After the prologue, nearly twenty years have elapsed since the scene in Catherine's laundry. The little Corsican lieutenant has become the Emperor Napoleon, and son-in-law to the Emperor of Austria. Catherine has long been the wife of Sergeant Lefebvre, who is now Marshal of France and Duke of Dantzic. We are in the salon of the Duchess, who is about to attend a grand court function at the Château of Compiègne. She is endeavouring to learn deportment, dancing, manners, how to make a curtsy, and how to carry her train. She is surrounded by dancing-masters, hair-dressers, music-teachers, dress-makers, bonnet-makers, and boot-makers.

But although the sergeant husband has become Marshal of France and Duke of the Empire, she apparently has not risen to the level of her fortune. Her essays in manners are farcical. She wears an astonishing costume in violent contrast to the beautiful gowns of the court ladies who come to her reception later, and she makes mistakes for which she is taken to task by the Emperor's sisters, Queen Caroline and the Princess Elisa. They are mortified over her blunders at court, and angry at her honest denunciation of courtly immorality. A wordy war ensues, in which Catherine shows that she has not lost her ready wit or her bitter tongue.

Amusing as is this scene, it is a surprising thing that this clever laundress should have become a Duchess without losing her washerwoman ways. She is depicted as being awkward, slangy, and ill at ease. Despite the legends concerning her easy ways and familiar language as a duchess, it seems incredible that she should not have kept up to the level of Napoleon's parvenu court. Still, her pitched battle with the imperial princesses, the sisters of Napoleon, is highly comic.

From the spectacular point of view this scene is most striking. The Bonapartes were noted for personal beauty, and the actors and actresses in the Paris production were chosen for their good looks. The beautiful women with their gorgeous gowns, the handsome men in the brilliant uniforms of the day, the rigid settings of the First Empire framework—all this together made a striking stage picture.

The manners of the laundress-duchess are too much for the Emperor. He sends for Marshal Lefebvre, and works himself into a rage over his wife's shortcomings. He denounces her for her clumsiness and her slang; finally, he tells Lefebvre that she has not only made herself ridiculous but the imperial court as well. He closes the interview by informing the Duke that if he would retain the imperial favour, he had better divorce the Duchess and that at once.

This unpleasant interview is related to the Duchess by her husband on his return. She listens to him with a mixture of rage and alarm.

"And you let him say that to you?" she demands. "If he had proposed divorce to me, do you think that I would have tamely submitted? Rather than leave the man by whose side I have been for so many years, in sickness and in health, through poverty and in riches, I would have told him to take his Duchy, his court, his marshal's bâton, and go to tophet with them. That's what I'd have said if he had dared talk divorce to me."

"Would you?" says the crafty Lefebvre, who is playing upon her feelings. "Is that what you would have said? Well, that's exactly what I told him." And the impulsive Duchess hurls herself into the arms of her rude Duke and weeps upon his epaulette, while they are linked in an embrace as lusty as in the days when he was a sergeant and she a washerwoman.

The Duchess is convinced that the sisters of Napoleon are at the bottom of these intrigues, and that they are poi-

soning the Emperor's mind against her. She consults Fouché, the ex-chief of police, who is friendly to her. He tells her that she is right in her suspicions about the Emperor's sisters, but warns her to keep her temper and to hold her tongue. She follows his advice by flying into a terrible rage when she meets the two sisters, and accusing them of violating the seventh commandment. She is summoned to appear before the Emperor.

In the third act the Emperor is seated in his library at Compiègne. He is attended by the Duke of Rovigo, his chief of police, by Constant, his man-servant, by Roustan, his mameluke, and by a large and brilliant gathering of officers. The Emperor's sisters, Queen Caroline and Princess Elisa, soon apply for a private audience, and the Court is dismissed. A family scene ensues. The sisters inform their brother that his wife, Marie Louise, is unfaithful to him, and that Neipperg, the Austrian, is her paramour. The Emperor flies into a rage, and bitterly reproaches his sisters. The princesses angrily defy their brother, who tells them he has taken them out of the gutter. Their voluble scolding impels them to such chance-medley anger that they finally attack each other; they drop French and fall into the picturesque patois of their Corsican youth; they hurl pungent epithets in French, Italian, and Corsican. The Emperor himself suddenly relapses into the vigorous language of their childhood. The Bonaparte family's dirty linen is washed with great vigour in the midst of imperial splendour and solemn pomp. Finally the Emperor loses all self-control, and chases the imperial princesses from his presence with the poker and tongs.

Madame Sans-Gêne arrives on the heels of this scene, forewarned of the expected storm. It breaks upon her at once. Being in the vein by reason of his little family jar, the Emperor launches upon her all manner of invective. He reproaches her with lack of ease and lack of breeding; he

bitterly complains that "she cannot turn around without falling over her train"; he accuses her of having brought ridicule upon his court by her camp manners. He tells her that it must stop, and the only way to stop it is to divorce her from the Duke of Dantzic. She replies with spirit, as her husband has replied. The Emperor continues to grumble, the Duchess continues to defend herself. She declares that if she has spoken rudely to the imperial princesses it was because "they began it by sneering at the army." This arouses the Emperor. His loyalty to his army and his comradeship for the Duchess begin at once to pierce through his mask. He cross-questions Madame Sans-Gène as his manner softens. She enumerates her campaigns with the armies of the Moselle, the Vosges, and the Rhine. She tells of her wound at the battle of Wagram, for she was then a vivandière. The Emperor by turns smiles and grows thoughtful as she eloquently recapitulates his glory and his triumphs. He finishes by taking a pinch of snuff and pinching her ear, as was his wont with those who pleased him. The Duchess becomes emboldened at his change, and she dares to tell him that they are old acquaintances; that when he was a lieutenant she washed for him, and as he was too poor to pay her, there still remains an unsettled laundry bill of sixty francs. If (says the Duchess) he is about to divorce her from her husband and drive her from the court, she will need money; therefore, she begs him to pay his twenty-year-old wash bill. The amused Emperor begins to haggle over the size of the bill, but the Duchess refuses to reduce it, and tells him that he still owes her "three Napoleons." There is a curious touch at the end of the scene, which shows the animal nature of the Emperor. He has kissed the hand of the Duchess and is examining an old scar upon her rounded arm, when he suddenly seems to notice that the sometime vivandière is still plump and pretty. He proceeds to linger over the caress, but receives

a sharp rebuke, for the laundress-duchess is still faithful to her husband-lover, and, unlike some higher-born ladies, her fidelity does not yield even to an Emperor.

The next scene is in Napoleon's cabinet. It is midnight. The Emperor hears a noise near the private apartment of the Empress, Marie Louise. He has the lights extinguished, and his faithful mameluke Roustan seizes in the darkness Count Neipperg, who is making his way to the Empress's chamber. Napoleon is doubly furious—as husband and as Emperor. Sardou's iconoclastic humour is shown in this scene, wherein Napoleon is depicted in his night-clothes crazed with jealousy, and raving like a jealous bourgeois husband. He so bitterly abuses Neipperg that the Austrian draws his sword upon the Emperor. Napoleon at once gives orders that he be shot in secret. But Madame Sans-Gêne, who has already once saved Neipperg's life, saves him again, partly to prevent another crime from being laid at her imperial master's door. In the end, Madame Sans-Gêne and Fouché devote themselves to clearing the Empress's name from the stain of the suspected liaison with Neipperg. This they succeed in doing, and at once bundle the adventurous Austrian out of the country.

LA TOSCA

THE play opens in Rome, in the year 1800, in the church of St. Andrea. The young painter, Mario Cavaradossi, is only half Italian, his mother being French. He is a pupil of David and inclined toward Jacobinism. He is working at a fresco in the church. Suddenly a man appears coming from one of the chapels of the church. He is a political refugee, one of the defenders of the Parthenopean Republic.¹

The refugee is Cesare Angelotti, condemned to death, who, the night before, succeeded in escaping from Castle St. Angelo, aided by his sister, the Marquise Attavanti. She has left for him in the chapel of the church of Saint Andrea a woman's attire, including gown, mantle, and fan. Note the fan. The artist places himself at the disposal of the refugee Cesare. He offers to conceal him in his villa in the environs of Rome.

While Cesare is disguising himself in the chapel, La Tosca, the celebrated singer, comes to visit Mario, who is her lover.

She piously offers flowers to the Madonna to secure pardon for amorous peccadilloes, yet under the indulgent eyes of this Italian virgin she coquettes with her lover. She scolds Mario for his lack of piety while she toys with his moustache. She flies into a fit of jealous anger because to the Magdalene painted on the wall he has given the features of the Marquise Attavanti. Why has he given the blue eyes of the Marquise to the Magdalene? Cannot a Magdalene have black eyes like those of La Tosca herself? In her

¹ This was the new title given to the Kingdom of Naples in 1799 by the French. It lasted only 5 months; the monarchy was then restored by a loyalist rising.

gaiety, in her anger, even in her jealousy, the cantatrice is infinitely charming. At last the artist Mario succeeds in appeasing his mistress, and she leaves the church. Just as she leaves, Baron Scarpia, the chief of police, arrives, but too late. The refugee Cesare has had time to disguise himself and to hide. But he has forgotten the fan, and Scarpia picks it up.

That evening Scarpia shows the fan to La Tosca at a fête which is given at the Farnese Palace, where she is to sing. The jealousy of La Tosca is aroused. She remembers that Mario had told her he intended to pass the night in his villa. No doubt, thinks the jealous woman, he is there now with the Marquise. La Tosca immediately hastens thither. Scarpia and his men have only to follow the jealous woman, who thus puts them upon the track.

We must pass over here a host of agreeable and ingenious details, such as the *Te Deum* sung in the church to celebrate the victory that Melas has just achieved over Bonaparte at Marengo; the swarm of brilliant butterfly costumes in the Farnese Palace; the witty dialogue between the worthy Marquis Attavanti and his wife's *cavaliere servante*. Not the least interesting of these incidents is that in the middle of the festival a dispatch from General Melas announces that it is not he, but Bonaparte, who, toward the close of the day, has conquered at Marengo.

At the period when the play opens (June, 1800), the troops and the police were occupying Rome after the fall of the Parthenopean Republic. It was the eve of the battle of Marengo. The time was an ugly one; the court a corrupt one. The Naples government was noted for the refined cruelty of its agents. Emma Lyon, become Lady Hamilton, controlled the Queen absolutely. To wear the hair cut short in the fashion of the French Republic was punished by death. Torture was common. Mammone, a bloodthirsty gentleman who loved human heads as articles

of ornament, was a person in authority. It was a bloody time. According to Sardou, Judge Trobridge sends to Lord St. Vincent the head of a Jacobin neatly packed in a box, and excuses himself for not having favoured Lord Nelson with a similar gift because the weather was too hot for it to keep. All this goes on amidst gallantries almost incredible even at the end of the eighteenth century. Cannibals in powdered hair, barbarians in silk stockings—such are the types of personages which the playwright presents to his audience.

In the third act *La Tosca*, wild with jealousy, bursts into the villa where Mario has concealed Cesare Angelotti. Her lover convinces her of her error, and repenting of her haste and her jealousy, she falls on her knees and begs his pardon. But Scarpia and his spies have followed her. At this very moment they knock at the door. Cesare is there; he is disguised as a woman, with clothing borrowed from his sister, the blue-eyed Marquise. He is suddenly concealed in a secret hiding place. This refuge is known only to his host, the painter Mario, and the mistress of that host. They are the only two who can deliver him to the police. The Chief of Police, Scarpia, demands that Mario shall betray to him where Cesare is concealed. Mario refuses. Scarpia has Mario taken behind a screen and put to the torture. His head is bound in a steel band with three points which are pressed into the temples by means of screws. Scarpia knows that Mario, even under the torture, will not deliver up Cesare, but he also knows that *La Tosca* will speak rather than permit her lover to endure the awful trial. The unfortunate woman resists for some minutes. From behind the screen comes the strangely altered voice of Mario, half choked with pain, bidding her be silent. But Scarpia orders an additional turn of the screw, and then the victim utters so horrible a cry that *La Tosca* lets fall the secret which betrays Cesare.

After the avowal of La Tosca, Mario is brought in, pale as death, his forehead bearing bleeding wounds. But the torture has been futile—Cesare, when he heard the approach of the police, took poison, and his dead body was all they found. "Drag it away!" cries Scarpia; "throw the corpse into the dungheap, and take the living man to the scaffold." A faint sound is heard—it comes from La Tosca, who has fallen senseless to the floor.

In the fourth act we find Scarpia seated at a sumptuous supper in his apartments in Castle Saint Angelo. He has La Tosca brought before him. She heaps upon him insults and imprecations. Her passion arouses his desire. He demands of her, more beautiful in her rage, if she wishes to save her lover. He tells her at what price. He whispers it in her ear. She cries, "Never!" and recoils, but he pursues her around the chamber with lust shining hateful in his eyes. "Then your lover shall die," he says with a wrathful scowl. At last La Tosca consents to Scarpia's bargain. It is agreed that he shall order Mario to be shot, but that the guns of the firing squad shall contain only blank cartridges. La Tosca bids him draw up the order to this effect, likewise a safe-conduct for her and Mario. But the moment he has finished the writing she seizes a knife from the supper-table and plunges it into his heart. As the bleeding body falls backward to the floor, she wipes her hands on the table-cloth, arranges her dishevelled attire, places a crucifix on the dead man's breast, puts candles around him, kneels by his side a moment in prayer, and then disappears through the door.

In the fifth act La Tosca has gone to Mario, who is in the condemned cell. She relates to him all that she has said and done and how she has arranged to save his life. But the soldiers come, and he is led away. From without, she hears the crash of muskets. With a joyful cry she goes to find her lover, who she believes is pretending death.

The last scene is on the terrace of Castle St. Angelo, where the execution has taken place. La Tosca comes, feverishly searching for her lover, whom she still believes to be alive. But Scarpia has deceived her—he did not give the order he had promised—the soldiers had loaded their muskets with ball. La Tosca sees before her only the bleeding body of her lover. With a wild cry she leaps from the lofty parapet of Castle St. Angelo and is drowned in the turbid Tiber.

THERMIDOR

It is curious how little even experienced critics can foretell the reception of a play. Francisque Sarcey witnessed the dress rehearsal of "Thermidor" without the faintest idea of the trouble which the play would cause. Writing on the 2d of February, 1891, he discussed the dress rehearsal. These rehearsals in Paris are largely attended by critics, other journalists, actors, managers, officials of the various ministries, and privileged persons generally. Frequently at a rehearsal there will be an audience of several hundred persons. At the "Thermidor" rehearsal Sarcey was present, and saw no promise of potential trouble; even the first representation, according to his account, passed off without any noticeable excitement. M. Clémenceau was present, and Sarcey heard him jest about the length of some of the political harangues in the play, but without expressing any particular animosity. This is notable, as M. Clémenceau was subsequently regarded as a ringleader in the riotous manifestations against the play.

The first representation took place on a Saturday. The manager of the leading theatre at Nice had invited the Paris critics to visit the southern city to witness the first representation of Emile Blavet's "Richard III." The critics had consented, on condition that the date of the "Richard III." production be postponed until immediately after the première of "Thermidor." This was done, and on the morrow of the "Thermidor" production the group of critics left for Nice, all unsuspecting of the coming quarrel. Little did they think that the play they had just witnessed would turn out to be a veritable powder-magazine, whose explosion would shake the Comédie-Française, and almost blow the ministry from power.

When the critics arrived at Nice they were rendered speechless with surprise by the receipt of telegrams from Paris speaking of "grave disorders over 'Thermidor.'" They carefully compared notes, but their united recollections could call up nothing in the play calculated to lead to civic disorder. They finally concluded that a small knot of rowdies or practical jokers had attempted to disturb the audience, and that their efforts had resulted in a panic. But the telegrams continued to come, and continued to grow more threatening. Sarcey admits that he was one of the optimists, and maintained that the third representation (coming, as it did, on a Tuesday) would settle all disorder; that the Tuesday audience at the Comédie-Française is the famous "Tout Paris"; that on Tuesdays the spectators are made up of the fine flower of Paris; that there would be absolutely no places at the disposition of the populace except in the third gallery, and there half a dozen police agents could maintain order. But, to the amazement of his confrères and the discomfiture of Sarcey, the usual Tuesday performance at the Comédie did not take place, for the Monday night turned out to be a pitched battle fought out with fists and canes. Therefore, the Government decided to prohibit the further production of "Thermidor."

Like the classical tragedies, the drama of "Thermidor" takes place in a single day—in fact, in less than the classical twenty-four hours. It begins with the break of dawn; it is ended before night-fall. This rapidity of the action is itself in accordance with historical verity, for the play is intended to show us the workings of the Reign of Terror, and in that bloody time a single day often sufficed for the arrest, the judgment, and the execution of the victim.

The dominant idea of "Thermidor" is new to the stage. It is the denunciation of a young girl to the Revolutionary Tribunal. In spite of the effort made to save her—of which she refuses to avail herself because she considers

the means dishonorable—she goes to the tumbril. Sardou evidently asked himself what, in that terrible time, could have been the most heroic form of sacrifice; and he replied through his play that nothing can surpass the courage of a young girl who lays down her life rather than lose her good name.

The first scene is laid on the bank of the Seine. On the right is a place where washerwomen congregate. At the back, across the arches of the bridge, are to be seen the tangled streets of old Paris. To this spot on the river bank, Chance, the playwright's trusty henchman, conducts the principal personages of the drama. First comes the actor, Labussière, who is the pivot of the piece. This soft-hearted player abominates the crimes of the Revolution, but he must needs look to his own head, at an epoch when heads were so lightly fixed upon men's shoulders. The ingenious Labussière has, therefore, found a means of saving his own head, and at the same time contriving to succour those of his friends whose heads are in danger. To accomplish this, he has donned a tiger's skin—that is to say, he has accepted a position in the office of the Committee of Public Safety, one of the branches of the Revolutionary Tribunal. Thus there pass through his hands the dossiers or indictments which condemn the victims to the guillotine. Labussière spends his time in going over these documents, mislaying some, and making away with those of the most helpless victims. Fearing to leave any trace of them, he secretes the papers, soaks them in water, converts them into pulp, and when it is dark, goes to the river bank to throw them into the Seine. Such is his errand on this particular morning.

The next person to appear is a young officer, Martial Hugon, who has returned from the wars, detailed to bring back to the Convention some captured flags. This brilliant young soldier has fallen in love. He has a romantic adven-

ture to relate. He has succoured a young girl whom he found fainting in the snow. He has learned from her that her name is Fabienne Lecoulteux. She has just left a convent, and, being the sister of a rebel, she was, as such, suspected and persecuted. Martial has placed her with a female relative of his, where he thought she would be secure. Naturally, the only thing to do was to fall in love with her, which he at once did. The young couple exchanged vows to wed. Martial was then obliged to rejoin his command in the field, and not long after he was reported dead on the field of battle. But he was not dead, although desperately wounded. He has returned to Paris, but finds that Fabienne has disappeared. He searches for his sweetheart throughout the great city, but in vain.

The third person to appear on the scene is the young girl. We have already learned that the river bank is frequented by washerwomen. At this moment they come trooping in. There is evidently some excitement among them—there are sounds of loud jeers and mocking voices. They are pursuing and harassing a young girl, one of their number, and mocking her because she is a “fine lady,” an “aristocrat,” and because she has white hands. Increasing in their fury, they finally shriek, “To the river! throw her into the river!” It is Fabienne. Martial Hugon recognises her, and rushes to save her from the fury of these viragoes. But he would not succeed were it not for the assistance of the good Labussière. The actor shows to the eyes of the startled washerwomen an official badge on which are these words: “*French Republic, Committee of Public Safety.*” The effect is magical—the mob respectfully falls back, and makes way for Labussière and his protégés.

It is in this act that the great political dialogue takes place between Martial and Labussière. It draws a contrast between the hopes of 1789 and the realities of 1793, and is a bitter and stinging indictment of the French Revolution.

It is this part of the play which caused such intense excitement, and which threatened to bring on a riot at the time of its first production.

The second act opens in the costumer's establishment of Madame Bérillon. Her husband is a recognised type of the times, known as "the trembler"—a good-hearted man whom the Terror has terrified into pretending to be a revolutionary ruffian. He has debaptised himself and his family, and has taken the classical name of "Casca." He is just equipping himself, putting on his red liberty cap, and girding on his great sabre, to go and attend the meeting of his "Revolutionary Section." The good-hearted Labussière brings to the establishment of Madame Bérillon his two friends, the young lovers. She receives them hospitably, and all sit down to a bounteous meal. There the story of Fabienne is told. Martial's female relative, fearing to keep her longer, as she is a "suspect," had turned her into the street. Fabienne thought at first of asking a refuge from an old servant of her family, who is married, and whose husband, Heron, holds a government position; but the husband offered her insulting attentions, which drove her from this house, and she went back to the convent. But even here the anger of the baffled libertine, Heron, has followed her, and the question is whether she shall flee to the frontier with Martial. As the lovers are warmly discussing this question, a tumult is heard from the street. They go to the windows. A mob is there, dancing the Carmagnole around a squad of soldiers who are escorting to prison the nuns from Fabienne's convent. Fabienne shows herself at the window and cries out, "I am she whom you seek. I am Fabienne Lecoulteux, in religion Sister Marie Madeleine."

The third act takes place in one of the rooms of the Louvre. Upon the walls are shelves on which repose vast masses of documents. It is Labussière's office. There is

a great rushing of officials to and fro, for there is a meeting of the Convention to be held to-day. When all have gone, Labussière brings in Martial. Together they go over the indictments which must be sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal that very day before 3 o'clock. The Tribunal sits for two hours; at 5 o'clock the tumbrils take the victims to the guillotine. While they are looking over these papers, and remarking on the frivolous charges for which men's heads are falling, the patriot Marteau comes in, bearing a special and supplementary indictment. To the horror of Martial and Labussière, they read on this new indictment the name of Fabienne. She has been arrested; she will be taken before the Tribunal within the hour; her condemnation is certain.

Martial and Labussière are stunned. The two men face an awful problem which seems incapable of solution. How, by what means, by what miracle can they succeed in saving Fabienne? The time is passing, the seconds are slowly ticking away, while they are torturing themselves, advancing ideas which are rejected as soon as proposed. But they can think of nothing. Yes, there is one means, atrocious as it seems. It would be to substitute for Fabienne's death-warrant another's passport into eternity. Martial, who loves her, can think of nothing but the safety of Fabienne, and he begs Labussière not to recoil at this desperate attempt. If it is a crime, he says, he will take the responsibility. Besides, death for death, is it not better to compass the death of an unknown? Vanquished at last by Martial's ardent supplications, Labussière goes to the shelf where are the death-warrants under the letter L. He finds three bearing the name Lecoulteux. He looks around like a thief, takes them from their case, and places them on the table. They examine the three. The first is that of a man of eighty years. This would be futile—blinded by blood as is the Revolutionary Tribunal, the executioners

would quickly notice the substitution. Another is that of a woman of forty-two, but she has two children. Labussière refuses to consider the sacrifice of a mother, who would thus leave her children alone in the world. The third is that of a woman of twenty-six.

"Here is what we want," cries Martial. "She is twenty-six and Fabienne is twenty-two. Read, Labussière! She is a strumpet—she has been the mistress of a lord. She is a low creature."

"Yes," solemnly replies Labussière, "but she is a human creature."

This scene works powerfully on the nerves of its participants, but the tension is suddenly relieved by the irruption of an excited crowd into the room. They have just returned from the Convention. They tell of the fall of Robespierre. The Reign of Terror is ended. In their joy over the news, Labussière and Martial forget their project of substitution. There is no longer need of it.

The fourth act takes place in the great hall of the Conciergerie, which may still be seen to-day on the right of the great staircase in the Palace of Justice. Robespierre has fallen, but none the less the Tribunal continues its bloody work. Fabienne is named among the unfortunates who are just about to quit the prison for the scaffold. At the doors, on the staircase, lining the walls, a menacing crowd hurls insults at the victims. But Labussière and Martial have not lost all hope. There exists for women a means of postponing their execution; it is to declare themselves with child. The good Labussière obtains from one of the jailers the formal document used in such cases. He fills in the blanks. All it lacks is the signature of Fabienne. The two men beg her to sign it. "Is this a time to haggle over means when one is face to face with the guillotine?"

The fickle mob suddenly becomes interested in Fabienne. "What, execute a young citizeness that way?—a pretty

girl who has been a little gay, and who is going to become a mother? No, no!" The mob is partly pitying, partly amused, partly jeering. "No, no! Let her go back to her cell, and have her baby."

But Fabienne, wild with indignation, refuses the scornful gage. "They have lied, lied atrociously! This man is not my lover. Do not insult a modest girl. Let me rather be a martyr than dishonoured." And she is taken away, with the others, to the guillotine. Maddened and frenzied, the hapless lover, Martial, precipitates himself on the soldiers to drag her from them. They fire upon him, and he falls dead as his sweetheart goes to the scaffold.

FÉDORA

THE play begins at St. Petersburg, in the bachelor apartment of Captain Vladimir Garishkine, son of the Minister of Police. The Captain, although still young, has led a reckless life in all the capitals of Europe, but he has finally been recalled to the Russian Court, with the prospect before him of filling high places in the employ of the State. Therefore he has decided to forswear sack and live cleanly—to mend his reckless ways of living, and to repair his shattered fortunes by wedding a young and rich widow, Princess Féдора Romazoff.

This we learn in the first act from the conversation between the Captain's valet and the jeweller Tchileff, who has come to deliver a piece of diamond jewelry.

But the Captain does not return, although it is already late. The Princess Féдора calls to ask for him, and is surprised at this prolonged absence. Her surprise soon changes into anxiety. Disquiet reigns in the Russian capital, which is ever terrorized by the secret workings of the nihilists. At this moment a police officer, one Gretch, appears, bringing Vladimir, but in a deplorable condition—he has been frightfully wounded, and is dying. The scene is a striking one—the chamber of the dying man, with the white-bloused surgeons going to and fro by the dim lamplight in the midst of the weeping servants.

The Princess determines to overcome her sorrow and learn the truth about her murdered lover. But the police can tell her nothing. Vladimir has been found dying, in a deserted house in a solitary suburb. His servants are interrogated, but all they know is that the Captain had received that morning a letter brought by a woman. He said at once, "I will go," and threw the letter into a desk

drawer. The Princess opens the desk and searches feverishly, but finds nothing. The letter has disappeared—stolen doubtless, but by whom? Evidently by the person who led him into the ambushade. But who has entered the house? Only two persons. The jeweller Tchileff is one, but this worthy person was not near the desk, and had not been left alone for a single moment. The second person is a gentleman who had called two or three times upon Vladimir. It is Count Loris Ipanoff. It is then remembered that Count Loris had seated himself at the desk under the pretext of writing a line to the absent Captain. Probably it was he who opened the drawer and took the letter. Therefore, it is Count Loris who was the assassin of Vladimir, and as Vladimir was the son of the Minister of Police, evidently the crime is due to the nihilists. Upon the imperious orders of the Princess Féдора, the police hasten hot-foot to the Ipanoff palace, to seize the Count. As they are leaving, Vladimir Garishkine, in the midst of his sobbing servitors, yields up the ghost. The curtain falls.

The second act takes us to Paris. Here we are introduced into the home of the Countess Olga Soukareff, an aristocratic person, who is very young, very pretty, very coquettish, very naïve, and very depraved. As a critic said of her, she delighted to mix nihilism with her dissipation—to mingle pearl powder with nitro-glycerine. The exiled Count Loris Ipanoff is one of the habitués of her salon. There he meets the Princess Féдора. The Princess has devoted her life to the discovery of her lover's assassin. She pretends to have been disgraced and exiled from St. Petersburg, and under this mask she secretly directs the movements of the Russian spies who have been sent to Paris to watch the nihilists. Count Loris is the object of their particular attention. Nevertheless, the Princess, for whom Count Loris betrays a dawning sentiment of love,

feels no repulsion for him. On the contrary, it would rather seem as if she loved him, and as if she wished to believe in his innocence.

The sudden avowal of his love by Count Loris entirely lulls the suspicions of *Fédora*. She allows herself to be wooed, she lends a more assenting ear than she herself suspects to the love pleadings of the Count. But when she pretends to him that she has been pardoned by the Czar, and proposes to Count Loris that he should return with her to Russia, he admits to her without hesitation that it is impossible, for he is exiled under the suspicion of a dreadful crime.

"What crime?" she asks.

"The death of a man."

"What man?"

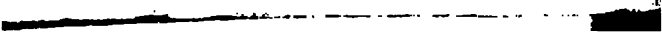
"He was called Vladimir Garishkine."

"But this charge cannot be true—it is not true!"

"Yes, it is true."

Thus the Princess finds herself face to face with her lover's murderer, confronting the man whom she has sworn to send to the scaffold. She tries to denounce him as an assassin, but she feels that in her heart she loves him, and in the struggle and turmoil of her contending emotions she cannot tell which will have sway, her vengeance or her love. Restraining her emotions, she begs Count Loris to relate to her the cause and the details of the murder. But Count Loris objects that it is neither the time nor the place for such a confidence; that they are in the house of a third person, and that such a confession cannot be made under such circumstances and in a few words. "True," replies *Fédora*. "I will return to my home, and shall await you there."

In the third act we find *Fédora* in her own house, on the Cours-La-Reine, which skirts the River Seine. It fronts on one of the most deserted of all the river quays of



Paris. She has given secret instructions to the Russian police spy, Gretch, and his agents. They are told that Count Loris will enter by the river gate of the garden, which he will find unlocked. When their interview shall have ended, and when the Princess shall have learned from him all she wishes to know, she will let him out by the main vestibule. There, the Russian police posted upon the pier will spring upon him, bind him, gag him, drag him to a swift steam yacht moored at the quay, and from there the yacht will dart down the river to Havre, where Count Loris will be placed on board of a Russian ship of war. "At that hour of the night," says officer Gretch philosophically, "the police of Paris will not bother us."

If the Count should resist, they are to kill him. This is the order from St. Petersburg, for the Minister of Police desires to put an end to his son's assassin. The Princess has already sent to the Minister of Police the names of two supposed accomplices of the nihilist Loris, a Russian named Platon Sokoleff, who has come bearing a letter to Count Loris from his brother, and the Count's brother himself.

Count Loris arrives at Féдора's house at last. He has just received terrible news. His brother's letter tells him that he has been condemned *in contumaciam*, and that all his property has been confiscated. So it means exile for life. Never again will he see his brother, or the old mother whom he loves so fondly, and whose eyes he will not be permitted to close. "Ah," he cries, "if I could only find out who has denounced me, who it is that is pursuing me even in France, who has set this crowd of spies on my heels! After all, there is but one thing that could turn suspicion towards me—it is the disappearance of the letter from Vladimir's desk—the letter which I took from there. Who could have fallen on this clue? Who has set the police on my track with such suddenness that it was only

due to a lucky chance that I was not arrested even in my mother's sight and that I had barely time to flee? Ah, if I knew this accursed spy, the author of all my misfortunes, I would kill—kill—kill!"

Fédora trembles and turns pale under this shower of threats. But what matters it, since within an hour she shall have avenged the death of Vladimir? But she must lead Count Loris to recite the scene of the murder. She utters the word "Nihilist!"

"Nihilist?—I a nihilist!" cries Count Loris. "Never!"

"But did you not kill Vladimir?"

"Yes, but it was for revenge, and in loyal duel. He had seduced my wife. I surprised them in the isolated house which hid their guilty loves. He fired, and wounded me. I returned his fire, and he fell dead."

"Your wife!" cries Fédora; "Vladimir the lover of your wife? Prove it!"

"There is nothing easier." And Count Loris shows to Fédora letters in which Vladimir assures the Countess Loris of his eternal love, at the same time mocking at the Princess Fédora, saying that he meant to wed her only to repair his shattered fortunes.

This terrible recital so excites Fédora that when the Count tells how he turned his revolver on Vladimir, she shrieks, "Yes, kill him, kill him!" as if she herself were in reality present at the bloody scene.

Count Loris, quivering with excitement, wishes to go. He fears that his prolonged presence in her house might compromise the Princess. Fédora does not wish him to go, for the Russian spies are in ambuscade at her door, waiting to fall upon their prey. But she cannot reveal to him the snare which awaits his footsteps, so she yields herself to him, and Loris does not leave until the break of day.

It would seem as if the end of this night of terror and

of love would lead to the legitimate union of Count Loris and the Princess Féдора. But the blind hatred with which the Princess has pursued the murderer of Vladimir has engendered fatal consequences. The Minister of Police, Garishkine, father of Vladimir, has been hurled from power by a Court intrigue. The Emperor has signed the pardon of Loris, but before his fall Garishkine had time partially to slake his savage revenge. He had the brother of Count Loris arrested as a nihilist, and secretly drowned in his dungeon. On learning the death of her first-born, the mother of the two brothers dies of grief.

These two messages of evil reach Count Loris at the same time, and he learns that his brother had been denounced simultaneously with Platon Sokoleff, also sentenced to death as a nihilist. He learns from his secret informant that the spy who had denounced his brother is a woman. Count Loris makes an awful oath to kill her. The despair, the tears, the supplications of Féдора at last make clear to Loris that the author of all his misfortune is before him. Revenge and fury break forth in his tortured mind. He demands an accounting from the Princess of all the frightful evils she has accomplished. He hurls at her bitter words, he calls her strumpet, spy. He threatens to strangle her with his own hands. But the unfortunate victim of love and hatred saves him from that crime by taking poison, and Féдора dies before his eyes.

RABAGAS

THIS play was one of several in which Sardou was accused of striving after political ends. As a result, the adherents of the particular faction or party attacked in his play revenged themselves by attacking play and playwright. "Rabagas" was first produced early in 1872, when the wounds of the war with Prussia, and the subsequent Communist insurrection, were as yet unhealed. In the last act of the play Sardou put into the mouth of "Rabagas" a long recital of the ups and downs of the various insurrectionary governments of Monaco. This is a parody on the numerous revolutions at the time of the Paris Commune. On the first night the actor, Grenier, who played "Rabagas," was extremely nervous, and in delivering this speech he seemed to make his audience even more nervous than he was himself. During the evening the spectators had been gradually getting restless, and this long speech was received with murmurs of dissatisfaction which at the end changed to vigorous hisses.

The playwright was charged by the radical press with caricaturing Gambetta in the person of "Rabagas." Other and milder journals seemed to see in the character a resemblance to Emile Ollivier, one of the ministers of Napoleon III. The critic Sarcey believed that "Rabagas" was a composite of Gambetta and Ollivier.

The scene of "Rabagas" is laid in the Principality of Monaco. In the first act the courtiers of the Prince are bitterly abusing the populace for their insurrectionary spirit, which takes the form of mutinous murmurs when the Prince and his courtiers pass along the princely high-ways. The spirit of revolt even descends at times to the

hurling of old shoes, unmerchtable cabbages, and deceased cats over the high walls of the princely garden. The headquarters of the insurrectionary sentiment is at the beer-house known as the "Flying Toad." Here the ring-leaders of the revolt are installed, here they hold forth in speeches to the populace, and here they publish a revolutionary journal called the *Carmagnole*. This sheet is edited principally by Rabagas, a clever but unscrupulous lawyer, aided by an unfrocked priest, Camerlin, and some kindred spirits known as Vuillard and Chaffiou, aided by an alcoholic soldier of fortune, one General Petrowski.

When the play begins, the Prince is much concerned over the disturbed condition of his dominions. Not a day passes without some new outrage by his subjects. Yesterday, a beautiful marble statue was mutilated; this morning, a horrible caricature of the Prince disfigures his palace portal.

So much is the Prince exercised over these affairs of state that he gives but a tepid attention to his daughter's affairs of the heart. The Princess Gabrielle is too obviously interested in her cousin Carle, a subaltern in the Prince's body-guard. The Prince is far from suspecting the unpalatable truth, that his daughter loves the untitled lieutenant. But he is much displeased with her familiar intercourse with this young gentleman, and forbids her to continue it. Therefore, the lovers are forced to meet clandestinely. Carle goes every night to a deserted part of the park under his lady-love's window. But last night, in getting out of the park by a postern gate with a private key, he ran against a ladder on which a man was apparently attempting to mount the wall. Fearing scandal might smirch his mistress's name if he were discovered, Carle silently fled under cover of the darkness, as the unknown fell heavily to the ground.

It is at this crisis in his domestic and political affairs

that an accident brings to the Prince's attention the presence of a strange lady who has just arrived in Monaco. It is Mrs. Eva Blount, an American lady, young, wealthy, and a widow. She is travelling for pleasure. The Prince and Mrs. Blount discover that they are old friends; they had met a few years before at Paris, where the Prince was spending some time incognito. Mrs. Blount is a lady of so much tact and knowledge of the world that the Prince begs her to accept the position of first lady-in-waiting to the Princess, and to constitute herself as guide and mentor to that feather-headed young lady. This Mrs. Blount consents to do. She also undertakes the position of ex-officio counsellor to the Prince, who is much in need of the advice of a person of her strong common sense. When she is thus taken into his official confidence, his ministers are urging the suppression of the Monaco insurrection with artillery and cavalry. But Mrs. Blount bids the Prince beware of such folly; she warns him that if he follows such advice he will soon be a fugitive and Rabagas will be president of the Republic of Monaco. He consents to abandon the coercion of the populace by arms, and leaves Mrs. Blount full liberty to perfect her own plans. This she speedily proceeds to do, with the wisdom of a serpent and the mildness of a dove.

In the next act we are shown the editorial rooms of the *Carmagnole* in the billiard-room of the "Flying Toad." The staff are awaiting the return of Chief Editor Rabagas, who is on his way back from Nice after assisting in the trial of a murder case. He enters; the great man is received with hurrahs and frenzied pounding of billiard cues upon the floor. He is hoisted upon the billiard table, and makes a speech to his constituents concerning the murder trial. "In saving the head of the accused," he says, "I have done only my duty. He is the son of a murderous father. He is a murderer himself. He was endowed by

nature with ferocious instincts. What matters it if he killed an old man by beating in his skull? It was not he who was at fault, but nature, who made him a tiger. What was this old man whom he killed? Nothing but an officer of the law. To bludgeon an officer of the law is not to kill a man, it is merely to crush a political principle." These remarks are received with frenzied applause, and the great man has his luncheon brought in, while the members of his staff tell him the news of the day and read him extracts from the proof-sheets of the paper. A patriot comes in bearing 47 francs, result of a subscription taken up in favour of a poor widow whose pig has been run over by the Prince's carriage. On his heels come Tirelirette and Théréson, two sixteen-year old misses in extravagant toilets, who come to demand food and wine-money from their "friends," who are members of the staff. They are bold and noisy, but are finally quieted by spreading a luncheon for them and giving them 20 francs out of the widow's subscription money. But the printer's devil enters at this moment, with the terrible news that the printer refuses to go to press until his bill is paid. The sum is 300 francs. After the staff have carefully gone through their pockets and taken the rest of the widow's subscription money, they are still short 20 francs. They fall upon the red-headed Tirelirette; despite her noisy sobs and shrieks, they ravish from her lean purse her solitary 20-franc piece. With this they pay the printer, and the *Carmagnole* goes to press.

At this moment the printer's devil announces to Rabagas that a "real lady" wishes to see him. He clears the billiard room, and receives the lady, with much empressement. It is Mrs. Blount. She comes ostensibly with the purpose of retaining him as her attorney to get her trunks out of the custom-house, where they are detained by reason of an excessive amount of lace on her gowns. At first, Rabagas

refuses to undertake the case, saying that he does no commercial business. But the clever Mrs. Blount conveniently remembers that she had her boots wrapped in socialistic Italian newspapers; and hence a political tinge might be given to the detention; that the great Rabagas could therefore attack the government for its attempt to suppress free thought and a free press. To this he lends a willing ear.

More cordial relations thus being established, Mrs. Blount gets to business. She tells Rabagas that the Prince is a great admirer of his ability; that his surroundings are unworthy of him; that his companions are low creatures unfit for him to associate with; that if he chose, he might climb to power by abandoning his associates and taking the side of the Prince. She bids him come to the palace for the fête that evening, and ask for her. Rabagas hesitates; he makes no promises, but it is easy to see that he is tempted.

Again the members of the Revolutionary Committee are assembled at the "Flying Toad." To their surprise, an aide-de-camp brings a missive from the court for Rabagas. He opens it, and reads it aloud. It is an invitation to attend a court concert that evening. Rabagas can scarcely conceal his delight, but the assembled patriots look upon him with distrust. He finally succeeds in lulling their suspicions by saying that he probably has been sent for merely to arrest him. But this trick of the court will be too late. That very night the revolution has been decreed. Rabagas points with pride to his own courage in entering the tyrant's den. Eleven o'clock is the hour, and the signal is a light flashed from the window.

In the next act, we find ourselves in the gilded halls of the Prince's court. There is excitement both within and without the palace. Mobs are collected on the great square, and the Prince's officers are begging him to disperse the populace with troops. He is wavering, when Mrs. Blount appears. He asks her counsel. She tells him that she can

produce a man who will calm this tumult as if by magic.

"Who?" asks the Prince.

"Rabagas," she replies.

"Where and how?" he asks.

"Here and now," she replies.

The Prince is horrified to learn that Rabagas has received a card for the fête, and may be expected at any moment. In fact, the great man speedily appears. He is received at first by Mrs. Blount, and he tells her mysteriously that he comes at the risk of his life and his honour to save her; he cannot explain what is about to happen, but she may guess; instead of taking her trunks into France, he says, she may soon need them to flee back into Italy.

Mrs. Blount listens to him, but earnestly bids him pause and reflect; his talents are lost with such a crowd of common people; he is naturally an aristocrat—his very demeanour in the palace proves it; if he can suppress the rising, she says, the Prince will be grateful to him. With these significant words, she leaves him to go and seek the Prince.

As she leaves the room Rabagas follows her with his eyes, muttering to himself: "Why, she is a Talleyrand in petticoats! Rabagas, my boy, you will be the Prince's minister. I always knew it. I knew I would come out at the top. Well, it's pretty comfortable here—flowers, lights, music, and pretty women. It's true they don't deign to look at me, but in a day or two they will all be at my feet. What a difference it is to be of the court, rather than as my friends are, looking at it through the keyhole."

But the seditious cries and the popular tumult without are growing in intensity. Each new arrival reports having received insult and almost outrage. The Prince is about to yield to the entreaties of his officers, and order the troops to fire upon the mob, when Mrs. Blount brings forward Rabagas. The Prince, with much distaste, receives this gentleman and listens to his counsel. Rabagas insists that

the people should be treated with consideration, persuasion, eloquence; a velvet hand is needed, he says, rather than a mailed fist; in short, a lawyer is better fitted for the management of affairs than a soldier. As to which lawyer, —why, his highness may readily—and so forth.

Swayed by Mrs. Blount, the Prince yields, and suddenly turning to the assembled courtiers, says: "Gentlemen, I present to you Monsieur Rabagas, your new Governor." He cuts short the effusive thanks of Rabagas by bidding him conjure away at once the peril of a revolutionary rising. Rabagas assents, and with an assured and smiling air, he walks toward the balcony overlooking the square. "I shall want," says he, "two lackeys with flambeaux to light up my face, in order that the people may not lose the play of a single feature. Watch me." As he utters the words the crash of breaking glass is heard. The mob have grown tired of hurling insults at the Prince, and have taken to hurling stones at the palace windows. With a theatrical smile, Rabagas steps upon the balcony to address the mob. He tells them that the Prince has appointed him Governor, and that this concession means a liberal government. But he is interrupted in his address by hoots and yells from the mob. They call him "traitor," "turn-coat," "police spy," "renegade." Finally, when he is wounded in the head by a stone, the exasperated Rabagas orders the Colonel commanding the palace guard to fire upon the people, to smash the printing presses of the *Carmagnole*, to gut the editorial offices, and to raze the "Flying Toad," so that not one stone should rest upon another.

When he hears this bloodthirsty programme the Prince turns to Mrs. Blount, saying: "Can this be the man you told me would get me out of this pickle?"

She replies: "Yes, and I am right, your highness, for he was the head of the mob and now the mob has no head."

The revolution was Rabagas, and Rabagas has turned traitor to his own revolution."

In the next act we find ourselves in the cabinet of Governor Rabagas, in the Prince's palace. He is attended by Bricoli, late secretary to his predecessor, now his own attendant. He learns from Bricoli that his orders have been carried out—his former associates of the "Flying Toad" are all locked up, the *Carmagnole* has been suppressed, and the presses of that radical paper smashed. He also learns that there is much excitement in the city, but, as it is patrolled by troops, there are as yet no hostilities.

Rabagas interrogates Bricoli as to the internal arrangements of the palace. He learns that the apartments of Mrs. Blount open on the same corridor as those of the Princess Gabrielle. The apartments of the Prince are in another part of the palace; from the Prince's apartment a secret passage leads to the garden, in the wall of which there is a postern door, giving a private exit to the street. To this door there are three keys—one for the Prince, one for the Governor, and one for the Governor's secretary. Rabagas immediately demands and takes possession of his key. Bricoli, who is full of zeal for his new master, tells how he has discovered the identity of the man who made his exit from the Prince's garden under cover of night. He tells Rabagas that it is André, a young officer of the guard. Neither of them know that in reality the midnight prowler was Carle, the lover of the Princess Gabrielle, and that his bosom friend André has declared himself to be the guilty one in order to shield not only the Princess but his friend, her lover, from discovery. Bricoli tells Rabagas that he has searched the apartments of André and Carle, which they occupy jointly; he has found there a suspicious letter, which he has brought to the new Governor. It is in a woman's hand, and it makes a rendezvous with the young officer that very night. Neither can guess who the lady

may be. But the thoughtful Rabagas puts the letter aside, thinking he may find it useful.

The zealous secretary Bricoli is now bidden by Rabagas to go forth into the city and stir up some enthusiasm for the new Governor; to order every householder to illuminate his windows; and to place on the public square, immediately fronting the Prince's palace, the inscription, "LONG LIVE RABAGAS," in letters of fire.

As Bricoli departs to carry out these orders, Rabagas begins a careful examination of the private papers of his predecessor. To his disgust, he finds among them grateful notes acknowledging the receipt of small sums of money, and signed by his associates of the "Flying Toad." "Faugh! what a rotten lot they are. I am the only honest man among them," exclaims the high-minded Rabagas.

In the next scene, we find Mrs. Blount and André together. She tells the young man that his midnight excursions in the garden must be accounted for to the Prince's satisfaction, and when he pleads ruefully that he can give no plausible pretext for his presence, she replies: "Why, every young man has a pretext for nocturnal wanderings. You are twenty years old—therefore, you are in love." When André admits that this excuse might serve, but pleads that he knows no fair one who might incline a willing ear, Mrs. Blount at once suggests Mlle. de Théroutane. His countenance changes, and he pleads that wicked tongues might play havoc with her fair fame were he to speak of her thus.

"Ah, is it so?" cries Mrs. Blount. "I see you think you are not in love, but you are, and you do not wish to besmirch her whom you love. You are a gallant young gentleman. So I will give you another woman to whom to pay your midnight court. Take me!"

"You?" exclaims André, in astonishment.

"Yes, me. You adore me. Last night you came under

my window to indulge in your nocturnal adoration, and——”

At this moment the Prince enters. He greets Mrs. Blount cordially, but looks upon André with marked disfavour. He coldly asks him what he is doing there when he is under arrest. Mrs. Blount intercedes for André, telling the Prince that the affair of the garden was nothing but an amorous escapade. When the Prince asks further details, she admits frankly that André has been lurking beneath her window, because he is wildly in love with her. At this the Prince looks at him with even more marked disfavour, and curtly bids him go. When he is gone the Prince tells her that he is both gratified and displeased—gratified because he feared lest Carle might have been foolish enough to be waiting beneath the window of the Princess Gabrielle; gratified that it was André and not Carle; gratified that it was not Gabrielle—but vexed that it was Mrs. Blount’s window and not some other court lady’s. He determines to order Carle to leave for Paris at once, on a mission to be confided to him at the legation there.

In the next scene the Prince is bidding good night to his daughter and Mrs. Blount. He is about to get a few hours’ sleep, for at half an hour after midnight he is to take horse with twenty troopers and ride to Mentone, whence news comes of a contemplated uprising. At this moment Rabagas enters, radiant, announcing to the Prince that the outbreak is quieted; the utmost enthusiasm reigns, and illuminations all over the city show how popular is the accession of Governor Rabagas.

“But, Monsieur Rabagas,” says the Prince, “you claim to have quieted the insurrection, do you? Yet, when I appointed you, I was just about to make all manner of concessions in order to avoid harsh measures. But you cried to me: ‘I represent conciliation, concord, peace—

just let me show myself to the people!’ You showed yourself, and what was the result? Charges of cavalry, volleys of artillery. This is scarcely conciliation. You called yourself a man of the people, but the people repudiate you. You are certainly not a man of the court. If you are neither the one nor the other, pray let me ask you what you are?”

Rabagas grows pale, and says: “Evidently your highness intends to turn me out.”

To which the Prince replies: “Turn you out? That is a vile phrase, Monsieur Rabagas. We will talk about the matter in the morning. Good night.”

When the great man finds himself alone, he muses bitterly, like Cardinal Wolsey, over the ingratitude of princes. “I am duped,” says he. “Double and triple idiot that I am, I have been gulled! They feared the storm, and they used me for a lightning rod. Two hours of power, and then to be ushered out by a lackey. And where can I go? I am suspected and distrusted by the people. I shall be stoned, perhaps assassinated. And for what? Two hours at court, and a bad dinner. I have sold my popularity for a mess of pottage. But they shall not force me to resign. They will have to drag me from my post, step by step, inch by inch!”

His secretary, Bricoli, enters, and finding Rabagas alone, announces two discoveries—first, the incriminating letter was written by Mrs. Blount; second, André on leaving the palace immediately ordered a travelling carriage. Rabagas at once divines the truth—André is about to elope with Mrs. Blount, their extreme precautions being due to the fact that she is the Prince’s mistress. Bricoli asks if the horses shall be taken out of the carriage. Rabagas tells him no; he bids him have the coachman wait at the postern gate on which the private corridor opens. Rabagas also tells him to notify the officer commanding the Prince’s

escort not to come until two o'clock instead of one. This complicated order being given, he orders the patriots of the "Flying Toad" to be taken from their cells and brought before him.

The interview between Rabagas and his quondam associates is an animated one. They accuse him of treachery. He accuses them of idiocy. They tax him with balking the insurrection. He tells them he did not give the signal for the outbreak because the people had gained all they desired by his accession to power. When they remark, with resentment, that he is the only one in power, and they have no offices, he tells them they are a parcel of fools unworthy of such a leader. Nevertheless, if they are faithful to him he will reward them. This is his plan: He is about to release them; thereupon they must make arrangements for an outbreak at Mentone. All along the route shouts must go up that Rabagas is master of the palace, with the Prince his prisoner, and Rabagas is bringing him to Mentone. In the meantime the people must take possession of the Hôtel de Ville there; and at one o'clock in the morning the Prince would arrive at the Hôtel de Ville in a carriage, bound and gagged. When they ask how all this is to be accomplished, he tells them: the Prince will descend to the postern gate at one o'clock; a carriage will be waiting there; they three must fall upon him, bind and gag him; as soon as the Prince is in the carriage, he, Rabagas, will take his place on the box seat with the coachman, and drive at top speed to Mentone. There the frightened Prince would carry out their wishes, would abdicate, and Rabagas proclaim the independence of Monaco. When his associates ask what this independence means, Rabagas replies placidly: "A republic, with me as dictator." When they leave him the three other patriots privately suggest overturning the dictatorship and making it a triumvirate.

In the next scene Carle and André meet, and Carle learns that the Prince has ordered him to depart; the carriage is ordered, and his baggage is packed. Carle struggles against the inevitable, insisting that he will keep his rendezvous for that night with Gabrielle. André solemnly warns him against this imprudent step, but the lover is obdurate. He is in the vestibule upon which open the doors of both the Princess Gabrielle and Mrs. Blount. The hour is late. The ladies in waiting have withdrawn, and the lights are all extinguished. There is a faint light over the Princess's door. Carle goes toward it and conceals himself in an embrasure behind the curtain.

At this moment the door from the Princess's corridor opens, and Rabagas appears, a candle in his hand. He looks at Mrs. Blount's door, and mutters: "Evidently the handsome young officer of the guard is there. Everything is going well. He will stay there for some time. The carriage is at the door. We shall have the Prince on the high road to Mentone, while his escort of troopers will not come until an hour after he has gone."

As he is chuckling over his success, Mrs. Blount appears at her door, anxious to see whether the impetuous lover, Carle, has indeed departed. She runs into Rabagas. He politely requests her to return immediately to her apartment. When she asks why, he tells her that the Prince is about to go out, privately, accompanied only by his trusted Governor, and does not wish to be observed. When she asks the reason for this nocturnal promenade, Rabagas replies he has made arrangements for some spontaneous manifestations of joy along the way—partly for the Prince and partly for Rabagas. Mrs. Blount replies that she will not retire, and that she is determined to advise the Prince against this rash expedition. Rabagas blusters; if she dares to do this he threatens he will tell the Prince there is a man in her chamber. At first Mrs. Blount is about to

resent this accusation. But she conceals her anger, and asks, "What man?" Rabagas replies: "André de Mora." When she asks him how he knows this, he triumphantly exhibits to her the Princess Gabrielle's letter to Carle. Mrs. Blount affects to be overcome with terror at sight of the letter, and begs him to give it to her. He promises that if she will not seek to keep the Prince from leaving the palace he will give her back the letter. She suspects that Rabagas has contrived an ambushade for the Prince, intending to kidnap him, and determines to warn the Captain of the guard. But Rabagas distrusts her, and bars her way as she attempts to leave the vestibule. At the end of her expedients, she affects to give way, and promises to aid him, but only on condition that he shall return her letter. To this he agrees, and they conceal themselves behind the curtains leading to her door.

The Prince appears alone, carrying his cloak upon his arm. Mrs. Blount—unseen by Rabagas, the curtain being between them—makes imperative signs to the Prince not to go out. He quickly comprehends, and returns to his apartments. But the opening and closing of doors, and the sound of his footsteps along the corridor, lead Rabagas, who is unfamiliar with the palace, to believe that the Prince has gone to the postern gate. He whispers to Mrs. Blount, "Is he gone?"

"Yes," she replies, "yes, he is gone. And now, give me back my letter, which you promised me."

But Rabagas with a sneer says, "Wait—I'll give it to you some other time." Breaking away from her grasp, he hastens down the private corridor toward the gate.

"What a treacherous rascal!" says Mrs. Blount, contemptuously, as she looks after his retreating form. From without there comes the sound of a struggle, the noise of trampling feet, and a stifled cry, followed by the rolling of carriage wheels. "I knew it," she says, "it is an

ambuscade. But the Prince is safe, thank God. And now, for greater security, let me make the Princess also safe—at least for to-night.” Hastening to the Princess’s door she double-locks it and puts the key in her pocket.

In the next act André has come at daybreak to the ante-chamber, where Carle was to have been on guard. His mission is to warn Carle to depart before the Prince should see him. He searches for him vainly. Mrs. Blount hears him; and coming from her apartments, she asks him whom he seeks. André tells her: Carle had not obeyed the Prince’s order to depart, for he was resolved to see Gabrielle once more before his departure; therefore he had changed places with André, taking his friend’s guard duty for the night.

When she hears this, Mrs. Blount is overcome with alarm. She asks at what hour Carle was at the rendezvous, and when André tells her at eleven o’clock, she exclaims in terror that she had locked the Princess’s door at midnight, and out of her pocket takes the key.

“My God, Madame!” cries André, “you have locked them together for the whole night! Hasten! unlock the door before the Prince learns of this, or Carle’s head will pay the penalty.”

As she is hastening to unlock the door, the Prince enters. He gazes suspiciously at this second tête-à-tête, and comments on the lady’s agitation. She tells him that André has been relating to her the events of the night.

“Instead of relating the events,” says the Prince, dryly, “this gentleman should have been a part of those events. What were you doing here, sir, when your company was fighting at Mentone?”

To which André replies that he had left for Mentone with his men, but when half way there he had received orders to return at once to the palace. The Prince then

asks who was on guard in the ante-chamber the night before. André replies that it was he.

"How is it, then, sir, that I could not find you here last night when I was about to go out?"

André replies that he heard a noise in the courtyard below, and went there by the private door.

"Which is always locked," says the Prince, ironically. But on a sign of negation from Mrs. Blount, André tells him that, contrary to rule, the door was open the night before. The Prince recalls that this is true, and he is for the moment baffled.

At this juncture the Captain of the guard, who has just returned from Mentone, enters. He reports that order has been restored; the Prince's troops had taken the Hôtel de Ville at two o'clock in the morning, delivering Governor Rabagas, whom they found bound and gagged under a table, and bringing him back with them in a carriage. The Governor had ordered a royal salute to be sounded for him, which in effect at this moment falls upon the Prince's startled ear as Rabagas enters. The Prince requests an explanation of the adventures of the night.

"Your highness," says Rabagas, "I was entrapped—I was led into an ambuscade. I went out by this corridor to go to my apartments, when three masked men leaped upon me, mistaking me for you. They stifled my cries, bound and gagged me, and threw me into a carriage, which set forth at top speed. After an hour of this drive in darkness and in pain, I heard shouts: 'They have captured the Prince' was the cry. A horde of men surrounded the carriage. They threw themselves upon me, and dragged me forth. To their rage and stupefaction they found that the captive was not the Prince, but I. They rolled me under a table. As I lay there, helpless and gagged, startling events were taking place. A new government founded by Camerlin (in a Green Chamber) advo-

cated overlooking my defection and pardoning me. But another government with Vuillard at its head (which started in a Yellow Chamber) cried 'treason,' and declared against the Greens. At a quarter before two a third government founded by Chaffiou (in a Red Chamber) suddenly broke forth; they crept in through a window and imprisoned the Yellow Government, which still held the Green Government in captivity. But at two o'clock the Green Government succeeded in escaping by a chimney, came in again by the cellar, and surprised the Red Government, which fled through the window, thus leaving behind it its own prisoner, the Yellow Government, which also fled and took refuge on the roof. Vuillard arrested Camerlin, who arrested Chaffiou, who then arrested everybody. But trumpets were heard, and the Prince's police force, entering, arrested all three Governments and liberated me."

"This is all very interesting, Monsieur," says the Prince, "but tell me how you went out by this door without being seen by this gentleman, who was on guard here last night?"

Rabagas looks keenly at Mrs. Blount and André, and replies that André was not there when he departed.

To André's protest that he was at his post, the Prince replies that this was impossible, or he would have heard the sounds of the struggle at the door. "So, sir," says the Prince to André, "you are a soldier, you know what it is to desert your post."

But the Captain of the guard here interrupts, and says: "Pardon me, your highness, this gentleman was not on guard last night. The officer on duty last night was the Chevalier Carle."

Here Mrs. Blount, foreseeing the appalling discovery that is about to take place, goes to Rabagas, and beseeches him in whispers to give her the incriminating letter. He hesitates, but while he is fingering the paper, she snatches

it from him. The Prince sees her, and demands that she show him the letter. She tells him it is a letter of her own to André.

"I do not believe you," replies the Prince. "I have caught you in lie upon lie. I demand the truth. You have left me in a terrible frame of mind concerning my daughter. From your conversations with this officer, your sudden seizing of this letter, your suspicious watching of the Princess's door, and Carle's guilty presence here last night with the connivance of his friend André—all these things seem to point to a rendezvous here, of which this letter will tell the truth. From your guilty looks toward the door I very much fear that you have brought together in my daughter's apartment this unhappy pair. Give me the letter; if it is your own, as you say, it will prove at once that I am mistaken. Give it to me. With you I can do nothing, but I can punish your accomplice. For the last time I order you, if you would save him, to give me that letter."

Mrs. Blount is much agitated, but she still refuses.

The Prince says: "Captain, arrest this gentleman. *Will you give up the letter?* Before his company, on parade, degrade him for desertion. *The letter?* Break his sword across your knee. *The letter?* Tear off his epaulettes and slap his face with them. *The letter?* Order a firing squad of twelve men. *The letter?* Let his eyes be blindfolded and . . . *unfortunate woman! will you give up the letter?* or shall he be shot?"

Mrs. Blount, overcome, gives him the letter, and falls half fainting to the floor.

The Prince hurriedly runs his eye over the letter. "My God, it is true, then," he cries—"they are there together!" And he dashes toward his daughter's door. But before he reaches the door, it opens, and the Princess Gabrielle emerges, greeting him so calmly that he is staggered.

When he taxes her with having given a rendezvous in her chamber to Carle, she bursts into tears, and falls into the arms of Mrs. Blount. She tells her father that Carle left for Paris the night before at ten o'clock; before leaving, he had come to the garden to bid her farewell, but their last interview had been like all their others, she at her window and he in the garden. The Prince, shaking with his conflicting emotions, is mollified, and takes his daughter in his arms.

Suddenly trumpets are heard without, and the Chevalier Carle enters, having returned from Mentone, whither he had led the troops when they captured the Hôtel de Ville.

The Prince looks at him quizzically, and says:

"Approach, young sir. Do you know the penalty due the soldier who deserts his post at night?"

"Yes, your highness," says Carle, timidly, "it is death."

"In this case," replies the Prince, "it shall be not death, but marriage. Embrace your wife. Bless you, my children. Bless you." And turning to Mrs. Blount, he says: "Since we have made one misalliance, suppose we make another. Let us at one and the same time make you a Princess, and a mother for Gabrielle."

"And now," says the new Princess, "let us put a stop to revolution. Let Governor Rabagas issue this decree;" and she dictates to the great man the following proclamation: "*Any person having taken part in last night's uprising shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life.*"

When Rabagas is requested to sign this drastic document, he says, to the Prince: "Your highness, rather than attach my name to so cruel a measure I would offer my resignation."

"It is accepted, Monsieur," replies the Prince with great quickness.

Here, a wrangle is heard at the door, to which all turn.

Bricoli and the Colonel are coming in, each holding the other by the collar.

"What is the matter?" asks the Prince.

"I have arrested Bricoli, your highness," replies the Colonel, "for seditious cries."

"Not so, your highness," replies Bricoli, "I have arrested him for that very offence. He cried '*down with Rabagas!*'"

"But," replied the Colonel, "he was crying '*long live Rabagas.*'"

"Gentlemen," replied the Prince, "you can let go of one another's collars. It is neither '*down with Rabagas*' nor '*long live Rabagas*' but '*good-bye, Rabagas.*'"

LES BOURGEOIS DE PONT-ARCY

THE town of Pont-Arcy, upon the river Orge, is divided naturally into three parts; these, also naturally, are inhabited by three parties, the Upper Old Town, where live the nobility; the Lower Old Town, made up of the working classes; and the Center, or New Town, made up of the bourgeois, or commercial class. Above, the past; below, the future; between the two, the present.

At the time when the play begins, it is the bourgeois who dominate the town of Pont-Arcy. They are represented in the person of the Mayor, M. Trabut, and above all by the Mayoress, the handsome Madame Trabut, who is ambitious for her husband, and who hopes that he may become a member of the Chamber of Deputies and spend some time at Paris.

The political and social supremacy of the handsome Madame Trabut is menaced by an event which plunges the lower and the middle class into a fever of excitement. The Baron Fabrice de St. André is about to wed his cousin, Mademoiselle Bérengère des Ormoises. Now the St. André family has shared the liberal opinions of the bourgeoisie ever since the late baron, father of the present one, wedded Mademoiselle Brochat, who was the daughter of a Pont-Arcy tanner. Thus the marriage of the young baron with his cousin has all the importance of a reconciliation between two notable divisions of the society of Pont-Arcy. And as Mademoiselle Bérengère is pious and yet not bigoted, is virtuous and yet not prudish, as she therefore will have every opportunity of rendering her house the most agreeable and most hospitable in all the country around—it is very clear that the ambitious Madame Trabut is going to have a dangerous rival. Therefore, all manner

of intrigues are being hatched among the bourgeois, who conspire against the Baron Fabrice de St. André and his cousin Bérengère, if not to prevent his marriage, at least to render their residence in the town impossible, and to force them to migrate. The occasion diligently sought by all the evil tongues in Pont-Arcy at last presents itself, and it is on this that the play is based.

At the moment when the action begins, we are plunged into all the excitement of a local festival—an agricultural fair, a display of horse-flesh and fine cattle, and the inauguration of the statue of a local great man, utterly unknown to fame beyond the town's borders. In the midst of this confusion a young woman arrives from Paris, goes to the Grand Hotel of Pont-Arcy, registers under the name of Marcelle Aubry, and forthwith demands an interview with the Baron Fabrice de St. André. As soon as the New Town (where the bourgeois hold forth) learns of this incident, the gossips set to work. They carefully study the Paris directory: they find that Marcelle Aubry keeps at Paris, in the Rue Caumartin, a shop where costumes and fine lingerie are sold.

"Ah," cackle the bourgeois busybodies, "what can this young and pretty woman, who sells lingerie in Paris, have to do with the Baron Fabrice? Evidently it is an old mistress of his. He has abandoned her, now that he is about to marry, and she has come here to win back her faithless lover, or else to make him give her some substantial indemnity for his desertion."

So all the busybodies and gossips and the Baron's enemies place themselves on the lookout, and when Marcelle Aubry presents herself at the house of the Baron's mother—for he has been prudent enough not to receive a strange lady anywhere else—her movements are watched by a half dozen Paul Prys, including Léchard, the local

news-vender, and several old ladies, who have nothing to do but make trouble in other people's affairs.

At last, Marcelle and the Baron Fabrice are together. She has come to make a melancholy revelation. Fabrice has cherished a strong filial love for the memory of his father, who died a little more than a year before, stricken down by an apoplectic attack, while at Paris. Marcelle explains to him the reason for the long and repeated sojourns his father had made at Paris during the last years of his life. It seems that he had conceived for Marcelle a passion which she shared; he had too late avowed to her that he was married and the father of a family. Such being the case, he could do nothing to repair their common fault, and she had remained four years his mistress and had borne to him a child. Marcelle, though sinning, had retained the feelings of a worthy woman, and would have preserved his secret as well as her own. But unfortunately, an agent (who had acted in the purchase of the shop which Marcelle conducted) had in his possession some papers signed by the elder Baron de St. André. Marcelle owed this agent 50,000 francs, and he was threatening to make the widowed Baroness de St. André a defendant in an action to recover this sum. Marcelle shudders at the bare thought of such a revelation striking the widowed Baroness in her peaceful home, and she has decided to tell everything to the son, in order that he might settle the matter.

The young Baron Fabrice, after a first moment of repugnance at the recital of Marcelle, is obliged to admit its truthfulness. After looking over the correspondence she has brought, he admits that it is his father's signature, and he pays her the 50,000 francs, only too glad thus to spare his mother the terrible shock and shame.

But he had reckoned without the Paul Prys of Pont-Arcy. They have devised a scheme by which Marcelle,

on leaving him, shall fall into a veritable ambushade. She is arrested; she is taken before the Mayor and his police officials; her travelling bag is opened; she is ordered to explain where she got the large sum of money which it contains. The Baron Fabrice is obliged to interfere in her behalf, and now we have the scandal which Madame Trabut and her accomplices have been so skilfully endeavouring to bring about. Some of the officials have seen, among the papers in the travelling-bag, a letter beginning with these words: "My dearest love Marcelle." The widowed Baroness de St. André severely bids her son explain. How can Fabrice explain without accusing and blackening the memory of his father? He therefore permits all these gossips and spies to believe that Marcelle has been his mistress, and he is forced to make this avowal in the presence of Bérengère, whom he adores. It would seem that to proceed with the marriage is out of the question. The bourgeois of Pont-Arcy have triumphed.

Nevertheless, lawyer Brochat, the brother of the widowed Baroness de St. André, an uncle of Fabrice, has gone to Paris, to obtain information concerning Marcelle. He has found only too much information. He discovers that Marcelle Aubry, who is a young woman of good family and of fine education, was seduced by the elder Baron de St. André. Lawyer Brochat has discovered everything, has seen everything, even the child of this unfortunate connection. He is obliged to report a portion of these facts to the widowed Baroness. At the description of this child, whom he has found altogether charming, the heart of the widowed Baroness softens. She fancies that she is its grandmother. When she looks at the photograph, she says: "Ah, my son cannot deny that child. See what a striking resemblance, and how handsome it is! I must have it." This maternal effusion brings about the most striking situation of the play. The widowed Baroness

will not listen for a moment to the idea of her son Fabrice abandoning the child. She demands that he marry Marcelle Aubry. But Fabrice replies that it is impossible, and says no more. The resistance of her son is revolting to the generous heart of the widowed Baroness. She desires that he shall sacrifice his present love for Bérangère to the duty which he incurred in seducing Marcelle. As she cannot read his heart, she begins to doubt whether her son is worthy of any woman's love.

But Bérangère does not doubt him. Fabrice has said to her: "Bérangère, have you enough esteem for me, enough love, to believe in me without witnesses, without any other proof than my love for you, without even a word, without even a denial from me?"

"Do not utter a word," cries Bérangère; "I will believe in you in the face of the entire world." And the two lovers separate, full of faith in one another, for Bérangère retires to a convent until matters shall have cleared.

In the last act, lawyer Brochat decides to tell his sister, the Baroness, the truth. He thinks that, rather than allow her to condemn a living man to suffer under an unjust stigma, she should learn the truth about one who is dead. So the truth is told to her. She learns that the child which is supposed to be that of her son Fabrice, is in reality the illegitimate offspring of her own husband's amour with Marcelle. Bérangère comes back from the convent. She and Fabrice are restored to his mother's love. Their marriage takes place. The widowed Baroness takes her husband's child to her heart, and the bourgeois of Pont-Arcy find that their noses are put out of joint.

THÉODORA

WHEN Sardou's "Théodora" was produced at the Porte Saint-Martin Theatre the theatrical world had been anxiously awaiting its production. Sarah Bernhardt, who played Théodora, had not appeared on the stage for about six months—not since the failure of Jean Richepin's version of "Macbeth." Tickets sold as high as sixty francs. So successful was the play that Bernhardt was destined to appear as Théodora nearly nine hundred times.

The time of the play is in the sixth century, when Justinian, the Byzantine Emperor, was at his wits' end with insurrections, one of which resulted in the burning of the original church of Saint Sophia. The first scene, a gorgeous hall in the imperial palace, is in the nature of a prologue, in which the audience is told of the political intrigues. As the curtain rises, Théodora enters from a chapel, whence come the throbbing notes of an organ. Her costume is a replica of the celebrated mosaic of the Byzantine Virgin in the Church of Ravenna—her robe is yellow satin embroidered with topazes; her coiffure is ablaze with jewels, and in her hand she carries a white lily, which tradition says was Théodora's favourite flower. The Empress seats herself on a couch of tigers' skins, and gives audience to her courtiers and to ambassadors from foreign lands. With her is Antonina, her trusted friend and former companion in the circus. Théodora effects a reconciliation between Antonina and her husband, Belisarius, commander of the imperial forces, who has left his wife because of her infidelities. At last Théodora dismisses the courtiers, and is once more free. The courtesan appears beneath the golden robes of the Empress. Taking two mute slaves, she departs, heavily veiled, to meet her

lover, Andréas, who knows her only as "Myrtha," a young widow, about to be married to a rich old miser.

The second scene is laid in the vaults beneath the Hippodrome, filled with wild beasts in cages. Here Tamyris, an old and withered witch, gives to Théodora a love-philtre with which to win Andréas. Tamyris is an ex-circus-rider. A familiar dialogue takes place between the two, while lions and tigers pad softly up and down.

The next scene is in the atrium of Andréas, the simple lines of its pure Greek architecture contrasting strongly with the bastard Byzantine of the other scenes. Here a love scene takes place between Théodora and Andréas, who tells her that he is one of a band of conspirators; headed by Marcellus, Captain of the palace guards, they intend to take Justinian prisoner and carry him off to the coast of Asia. Suddenly a murmur from the streets is heard, gradually increasing, till, above the confused noise, voices can be distinguished. The mob is shouting a ribald song about Théodora. Andréas is laughingly taking up the refrain, when Théodora presses her hand on his lips, crying, "Oh, not you! not you!" The mob passes on, and Théodora hastens to the palace to warn Justinian of his danger.

In the next scene, the stage is divided into two compartments: the one, a cabinet, elegantly furnished in carved woods inlaid with gold and precious stones; the other, a gallery hung with Chinese tapestries, with a large window at the back, through which can be seen the Bosphorus. In the cabinet a brilliant light falls from a magnificent flambeau of beaten gold. The gallery is lighted only by a single shaft of moonlight. In the cabinet is seated Justinian, resplendent in his embroidered robes, and wearing the large pearl ear-rings of the emperors of Byzantium. Théodora enters. Justinian's suspicions have been aroused by her long absence; he is determined to know why she has

gone forth at this hour of the night. But she stops his questions by informing him of the plot against his life. The roar of the approaching crowd is heard; Justinian is about to accept the advice of Belisarius, and fly to some place of safety until his troops can be collected. But Théodora declares that she will remain to be killed as an empress in her palace, not fleeing like a hunted beast. Justinian at last determines to face the mob. But an unlooked for danger threatens him. Marcellus, having free access to the palace, has introduced his fellow-conspirator, Andréas, who is on his way to the Emperor's apartments. Théodora sees him, divines his danger, and suddenly locks him into the secret gallery. Marcellus, supposing Andréas to be behind him, is making his way stealthily into Justinian's cabinet, when he is surprised and bound by Belisarius and his aids.

Justinian orders that Marcellus be tortured to force him to reveal the names of his fellow-conspirators. The furnace is brought in, the pincers and branding-irons are heated red-hot. Théodora begs for a moment's private converse with Marcellus. Fearing lest he may divulge her liaison with Andréas, Théodora suddenly stabs him with the golden pin which confines her hair.

As the man falls dead, Justinian cries: "My God! What have you done?"

"He insulted me," Théodora coolly replies, "and I have killed him."

The scene changes to the garden of Andréas's house. The stage is set with giant palm-trees. At the back can be seen an arm of the sea, and in the distance the dim outlines of the Asiatic coast. In this garden, Marcellus is buried with Byzantine rites. During the ceremony, from behind the palm-trees, is heard the chorus of mourners, chanting a solemn dirge.

Théodora enters, and obtains a promise from Andréas

not to leave his house until she can provide a safer hiding-place for him. But after her departure his fellow-conspirators convince him that she is an impostor and has betrayed them to the Emperor, thus causing the death of his friend, Marcellus. Andréas vows vengeance, and promises to give the signal for an attack on the Emperor at the Hippodrome on the following day.

The sixth scene represents the imperial box at the Hippodrome; on a raised dais are the throne of the Emperor and the Empress's chair; around them the courtiers, arrayed in splendid costumes, glittering with embroideries of gold and precious stones. In the Paris production there were two hundred persons on the stage.

The Prætor, resplendent in his white tunic, embroidered with gold, his breast-plate shining with diamonds and rubies, and holding in his hand his golden rod of office, announces the Emperor. The guards arrange themselves in line, and Justinian enters with Théodora, preceded by the thurifers, bearing censers of chased gold. Bernhardt's dress in this scene was of *bleu de ciel* satin, with a train four yards long, covered with embroidered peacocks with ruby eyes and feathers of emeralds and sapphires. It was the work of the most cunning embroiderers in Paris, and was a perfect mosaic of precious stones.

At the sight of the Emperor and Empress a tumult breaks out among the people, and Andréas, hurling insults and reproaches on the Emperor, is seized by the guards. He is about to be executed by the Emperor's order, when Théodora stays the officer, saying: "Let him be bound. This man belongs to me." The people now fly to arms, and engage in a conflict with Belisarius's mercenaries.

The next scene is in the crypt of the palace, through whose windows can be seen the flames of the burning city. Justinian believes the Empress guilty, and has just deter-

mined to kill her, when the news comes that Belisarius has overcome the insurgents.

In the conflict Andréas has disappeared, and is thought to be dead, but Théodora finds him in one of the wild-beast vaults of the Hippodrome, where he has been concealed by Tamyris, who found him among the wounded. Andréas reproaches Théodora for her treachery, and she, in her despair, calls on heaven to witness that she truly loves him. As he still repulses her, she suddenly remembers the love-philtre given her by Tamyris; taking advantage of the wounded man's weakness, she forces the philtre down his throat. But Tamyris had by mistake given her a poison intended for the Emperor, who had caused her son to be executed among the conspirators. Andréas dies in the most frightful agonies.

Théodora has no time to mourn her lover, for the large portals of the vault swing open; the executioner enters, and presents to Théodora a red silk cord. She understands; removing her pearl necklace, she bares her neck and adjusts the cord. Then, bowing her head over Andréas, she says to the executioner: "Now, I am ready," and Justinian's slave strangles her upon her lover's body.

LES FEMMES FORTES

M. QUENTIN is a prosperous French manufacturer, recently returned from a trip to America, whither he had gone to settle the estate of a deceased uncle. He comes back filled with what he believes to be American ideas concerning the proper degree of freedom for women. His two daughters, Gabrielle and Jenny, have been living at home under the care of his cousin Claire, a young lady of beauty and accomplishments, but with no fortune. Gabrielle and Jenny are both lively girls, and when their father returns with these American ideas they accept them with the utmost enthusiasm. They have already rather disturbed their chaperone Claire by their tendency toward flirtation, and Jenny is now interested in a pretended Montenegrin prince, Lazarowitch, whom Claire is endeavouring to send to the right-about.

Domiciled with Quentin's family are M. and Madame Toupart, the latter a sister of Quentin. The defunct uncle owned a large factory near Havre, which Quentin and Mme. Toupart had expected to inherit, as they were his only heirs. But the eccentric old gentleman had always refused to see them, so they had given up all hope of inheriting from him. However, as his sudden death showed that he had died without a will, his property went to Quentin and Mme. Toupart. But there was a third heir, a brother of Quentin, who lived in New York. It was to see him that Quentin had made the voyage to America. When there, he found that his brother had just died, and that his only heir was a son who had not been seen for years, but who was supposed to be living in California. Therefore, as Quentin explains, he "put an advertisement in the newspapers." "It is the custom in

America," he says; "everybody's private affairs are in the newspapers. To ascertain news of your friends' health, to print news of your own, to get married or divorced, to advertise for a lost wife, for lost money, or for a lost umbrella, you advertise in the newspapers—it is the American way." So he inserts in the newspapers an advertisement, asking Jonathan Quentin, son of Auguste Quentin, if living, to send his address to his uncle.

His cousin Claire consults him concerning the pretended Montenegrin prince who is paying his addresses to Jenny; she suggests that a stop be put to his visits. But Quentin, imbued with American ideas, will not listen to it. "What," he cries, "treat my daughters as if I were a Turk? Why not put iron bars on the windows? Don't talk that way to a man who has just returned from a country where girls go alone on journeys of three, six, or nine months; where they receive whomever they please and when they please! I want my daughters to grow up into resolute, self-confident, strong-minded women, brought up in the English and American fashion."

To show how sincere he is, Quentin has engaged for his daughter an American governess, a Miss Deborah. He introduces her to the family as "Doctress Deborah." She has presided at three woman's meetings on the pressing necessity of teaching women in New York descriptive geometry. She has sacrificed family affection, health, youth, and beauty to the grand cause of feminine education. Under this lady's training, Quentin speedily learns that his daughters are growing independent enough, for he can never find where they are. What is more, he never can be sure at what hour he will have his dinner. One is out for a drive with a young man, and gets back half an hour late. Another decides to dine elsewhere, and does not send word that she is not coming.

While they are waiting for dinner, his brother-in-law,

Toupart, comes in with a letter; from this they learn that Jonathan William Quentin, son of the wealthy uncle, is living at Stockton, California, where he is proprietor of a large planing-mill, and that he intends to come to his relatives' house in a few weeks. Toupart sincerely hopes the young man will go to the bottom when crossing the ocean, because, adds the frank Toupart, he will insist upon dividing the inheritance, selling the mill, or making them pay him six hundred and sixty-six thousand, six hundred and sixty-six francs, and sixty-six centimes.

While they are discussing this unwelcome epistle, one of the daughters of the house enters, in hunting costume, with a very short skirt, gaiters, game-bag, and gun. She brings a young man with her, to take pot-luck. Claire discovers that both the girls have made plans for eloping that night, and is much shocked.

In the midst of this situation suddenly appears Jonathan. He carries a valise, swings a walking stick, and is followed by a dog. He informs them that there are not three heirs, as he is the only heir; there was a pre-nuptial contract which annulled the will, and therefore their house is now his.

Quentin sinks into his chair groaning: "We're ruined." The strong-minded daughters faint upon sofas. Jonathan carefully observes that the only one of the women who has not been terrified at his avowal is Cousin Claire.

In the scenes which follow Quentin and Toupart endeavour to induce Jonathan to be less hard-hearted. They try threats, pleadings, menaces of suits-at-law, but all are fruitless. They find that the American is better versed in the French code than they are, and they retire discomfited.

Then the two strong-minded sisters, one after another, try to exercise their charms on the young American, but fail ignominiously. Quentin at last notifies the family

that they must vacate the premises. While Claire is packing up such of the personal effects as belong to them, Jonathan finds that he has fallen in love with the penniless gentlewoman, and prefers his suit. The lady listens to him, but will consent to marry him only on condition that he will permit Quentin and his family to remain in the house. To this he at last consents, and the curtain falls upon a reunited and presumably happy family.

L'ONCLE SAM

THE play "L'Oncle Sam" was about to be produced at the Fifth Avenue Theatre in New York in the month of October, 1872, just at the time when that theatre was burned to the ground. Sardou then determined to produce the piece in Paris. But to his surprise the censorship forbade it. He endeavoured to have the ban of the prohibition lifted, but without avail. The censors referred him to President Thiers, who apparently was the person responsible for the interdiction. In France the chief of state interferes in everything. More than once Napoleon III. lifted the interdiction from plays. M. Emile Augier's "Les Effrontés" was first forbidden by the censorship and then permitted by the Emperor. Sardou therefore appealed directly to the chief magistrate. He sent his play to M. Thiers with the following letter:

PARIS, 20th January, 1873.

M. LE PRESIDENT:

Pardon the liberty I take in turning your attention for a moment from the grave matters which occupy you, that I may lay before you the following facts: I have written for the Vaudeville Theatre a play entitled "L'Oncle Sam." This piece has been commented upon favourably by the commission as offering nothing objectionable to public order or morals. Nevertheless, and despite this favourable report, my play has been interdicted by the censorship. The reason of this has been alleged to be injurious references in the play levelled at the institutions, the manners, and the morals of the American Republic.

I protest against this judgment. My satire upon American manners, however pungent it may be, has by no means the objectionable character imputed to it. The play in no instance crosses the limit accorded at all epochs to the stage. And if the play makes for the superiority of French manners and morals over the morals and manners of the New World, surely that cannot be accounted

a crime against them. Let a single word really painful to Americans be pointed out to me and I will at once cancel it.

Let me cite in support of my contention the opinion of the younger Mr. Washburn (son of the American Minister), who, having seen and read the play, declares to me that he has found nothing in it of a nature to wound his national susceptibility.

Therefore we must seek in vain the motives for so harsh an interdiction, and in the name of the managers of the Vaudeville Theatre, and in my own, I appeal to your sense of fairness and beg you to reverse the judgment of the censorship.

Receive, etc.,

VICTORIEN SARDOU.

After some time M. Thiers addressed to the playwright the following letter:

VERSAILLES, 12th February, 1873.

MONSIEUR:

I have received the letter which you sent me and the MS. which accompanied it. I hope that my delay in replying will not surprise you if you will be good enough to consider the many grave affairs which take up my time.

I regret to announce to you that after a second and careful examination of your play (an examination made by competent and unprejudiced judges) I cannot reverse the decision of which you complain. The piece would deeply offend a friendly nation whose citizens frequent our country and cause much material well-being by their presence. For the rights of talent I have the respect that those rights deserve, but it is impossible to sacrifice to them the public interests.

Receive, etc.,

A. THIERS.

It is rather remarkable that the President should have been so solicitous about wounding American susceptibilities, when Sardou had played havoc with the feelings of his own countrymen. The piece is very largely "La Famille Benoiton" transplanted to America. The decline of a French family is paralleled by the corruption of an

American family. Generally speaking, the French playwrights have been anything but gentle toward their countrymen. Adultery is the stock in trade of contemporaneous French dramas. In the successful French melodrama *Paris* is a lair of brigands, pickpockets, burglars, and harlots. When a married woman appears it is generally to deceive her husband or to conspire with her paramour to assassinate him. It is not unamusing therefore, to contemplate the perturbation of the French President over wounding the susceptibilities of another nation. At the close of the Franco-Prussian War, when there was much bitter feeling between the two nations, an enterprising German got out a book entitled "The French Painted by Themselves." It was made up entirely of extracts written by Frenchmen, and it said worse things of French men and women than ever were said by Germans.

An amusing sequel to this official interdiction of "L'Oncle Sam" remains to be recorded. Six weeks after the fire the Fifth Avenue Theatre was rebuilt in New York of wood. Manager Daly determined to put on "L'Oncle Sam." Manager Carvalho told Sardou that the production of the play in America would certainly cause the authorities to permit it to be presented in Paris. Sardou made a new appeal to the President and received a letter from his secretary which said:

"The President would regard as very unfortunate the effect that your play would produce on the Americans in Paris. The Americans may laugh at themselves but from a foreign people professing friendship such things would not be taken in the same spirit."

Such is the curious history of a French play which was forbidden in Paris and played in New York. Thus the French people in New York were enabled to see in America

a play written by a Frenchman satirising American manners, which had been forbidden in France.

In order to give a comic turn to this comedy of politics it remained only for the French government to turn a somersault. The 24th of May, 1873, brought about a change of government. Under the presidency of M. Thiers the play was considered dangerous to the public order. Under the presidency of Marshal Macmahon it was perfectly innocuous, and was put on the stage.

It was at the Grand Opera House that Augustin Daly put on "L'Oncle Sam," and the American people laughed good-humoredly at its satire without showing any resentment. Daly advertised the fact of its suppression freely. His programmes said:

"This comedy has been prohibited by the French Government for fear it might wound the feelings of Americans. But Mr. Daly, relying upon the intelligence of the people of New York, produced the play without suppressing a single word. He knew that the American people feel no resentment toward foreign writers who satirize our ridiculous sides—from the 'American Notes' of Dickens down to our days, and that an American audience would rather laugh over a satire on America than yawn over an apotheosis of the great Republic."

A curious phase of this curious affair was that the Parisian audiences took a harsher view of Sardou's satire on America than did the Americans themselves. A French audience is rarely interested in foreign plays and foreign manners. It was shocked rather than amused at the somewhat coarse flirtation scene in the second act of "L'Oncle Sam," and the remark was heard, "It is impossible that such things can take place in decent circles in America." Yet the same audience would smile indulgently over the extremely free and easy manners of the Benoiton misses in the satire on a *parvenu* French family.

The first scene takes place in the grand saloon of one of the steamboats running between Albany and New York, on the Hudson River. It is a floating town. One of the leading personages is a French woman, Mrs. Bellamy, who has come to the United States for a legacy to which she has fallen heir. There is another French tourist, the Marquis Robert de Rochemore. His principal task at present is to follow a charming American girl, whose name he does not know. Thanks to Mrs. Bellamy, the acquaintance is soon made. She presents the young and rich Marquis to Miss Sarah Tapplebot. The young lady is the niece of Samuel Tapplebot—hence “Uncle Sam.” Among the other passengers on board are Mrs. Belle Nathaniel and Miss Angela, cousins of Sarah; also the two husbands of Mrs. Nathaniel, the first being Mr. Elliott, a newspaper man, and the second Colonel Nathaniel, who still enjoys the honour of being the lady’s husband. Another traveller is lawyer Fairfax, who is an aspirant for the hand of Sarah, and the Rev. Jedediah Buxton, who is the minister of a new religion, and urges its dogmas, while at the same time singing the praises of a new spirituous liquor of his own invention.

These strange figures are framed in the sumptuous fittings of a magnificent steamboat saloon, through which stream darkies, carrying trays covered with “American drinks,” while a brass band blares away and endeavours to make its music heard over the demoniacal yells of the darkies, the banging of the boat’s bell, and the shrieking of its steam siren. This tableau strikes the key-note of the piece.

In the second act we are transported to one of the leading hotels on Fifth Avenue, New York, where all the personages of the play seem to have assembled. Even the young ladies are there, likewise “Uncle Sam” Tapplebot, who lives, for the most part, permanently at the hotel.

To Mrs. Bellamy, "Uncle Sam" and his son-in-law, Colonel Nathaniel, have sold at a very high price some swamp lands in the West, where they have laid out a boom town. She has come to beg "Uncle Sam" to sell her some more at the same price. This extraordinary demand completely upsets the wily "Uncle Sam." He scrutinises the French woman; seeing that she has by no means the air of a simpleton, he scents some new discovery of which he is not aware. He is morally convinced that she has struck either coal or gold. So he puts the lady off for the present, in order to gain time, and sends Colonel Nathaniel out to his boom town, in order to make explorations on the spot.

The Marquis de Rochemore has been introduced into her uncle's hotel home by Sarah herself, who (according to Yankee usage, as Sardou put it) is engaged in fishing for a husband and a fortune. In this act there is an evening party, attended by a number of very young girls. In this scene the French audience was shocked by the "American customs." The manner in which the playwright had represented the extreme freedom of manners which he believed to be common in America, did not amuse the French audience, but disgusted it. His attempt to represent what he believed to be "American flirtation," at times brought forth hisses.

A type of this is the conduct of Sarah toward the Marquis de Rochemore. She is very much taken with the handsome face, the title, and the fortune of Robert, and she enters into a conversation with him, which is partly flirtation and partly a keen lookout for number one. When she learns that Robert is the eldest son, that he has an income of 80,000 francs a year, and that he possesses landed estates, she gives him a melting look and makes him write on her ball programme, "I adore Miss Sarah Tapplebot with a view to marriage."

The poor Marquis had been warned by Mrs. Bellamy

of the dangers of American flirtation, but what man ever thinks of the counsel of wisdom when gazing into melting eyes? Furthermore, the Marquis has entirely misapprehended the conduct of Sarah. Her extreme freedom had led him to believe that it was not marriage that she desired.

In the third act we are taken to the Tapplebot country house, where "Uncle Sam," his family, and his friends, are enjoying the freedom of a Puritan Sunday, by drinking large quantities of frappé champagne. The Marquis presents himself unexpectedly. The careless young man of the first act would scarcely be recognised—passion has changed him. After three days passed in the most familiar intercourse with Sarah, without the young girl permitting him to infringe upon her self-respect in the least degree, she suddenly disappears without a word of farewell to Robert. She returns to her uncle's house; she also, like Robert, seems pale and troubled. An explanation is soon sought for between these two troubled hearts, who have been separated by a misunderstanding, which forms the clue to the play. What has happened? It is this: Sarah in the midst of her frivolity has suddenly felt within her something weaken, something give way, which hitherto had permitted her to play her part. She discovers that she loves Robert, and her love has opened her eyes. She learns that Robert has never seriously thought of making her his wife; that his love was not an honourable love. Yet her passion for him is so great that if she remains near him another day, she is lost, so she has fled from danger.

This is what Robert has learned in his turn: It is that he has no longer before him a young woman, sensual, sordid, calculating, who is legitimate prey for his passions, but a spirited young girl, proud, yet trembling, chaste and dignified, worthy of being loved for herself. He throws himself at her feet and swears that she must be his. This scene greatly moved the French audience, which during

the first two acts had not been amused but rather irritated by the satire on American manners. At the end of the second act, the piece was in peril; at the end of the third act, it seemed to have won the day.

A new complication changes the complexion of affairs. The two lovers fall into a snare. "Uncle Sam," accompanied by the Pastor Jedediah and two friends, the newspaper man, Elliott, his former son-in-law, and Fairfax, the disappointed lover of Sarah, present themselves at the door of the drawing-room.

"Sir," he says to Robert, "the situation in which I find you forces me to ask if you are ready to marry my niece. Here is a clergyman and here are two witnesses."

Robert rises from his knees in great indignation. The ambushade is evident; the warnings of Mrs. Bellamy come to his mind; the avowals which Sarah has just reluctantly made were evidently nothing but a plot to lead him deeper into the snare. He refuses.

"I suppose you know then," says "Uncle Sam," "we shall make you pay damages?"

"I do not know at what price you estimate the honour of a young girl in America," replies the Marquis, "but send the bill and I will pay it."

Then he goes out, leaving Sarah fainting on the floor.

The last act takes us back to the Fifth Avenue Hotel. We are in the parlour, which is at the foot of the grand staircase, at the back of the stage. Colonel Nathaniel has returned from his excavations in the boom town of Tapplebot. He has brought back from there nothing but a fever and ague, which makes his teeth rattle. He has found nothing. Nevertheless, Mrs. Bellamy renews her offers. She wishes to buy all the land there is for sale, not at the price she paid originally, but at double that sum; finally she offers even triple that amount, and offers to pay cash. "Uncle Sam" is completely hoodwinked by this persistence.

He not only refuses to sell a foot more of the precious land, but he points out to her a clause in the deed to the land she already has, which empowers him, under certain conditions, to annul the sale already made. He formally annuls the sale and offers her the money. The wily Frenchwoman sighs, but pretends to be resigned, and snaps into her pocket-book the bank-notes which "Uncle Sam" hands to her.

"Now that we have settled our affair," says the venerable "Uncle Sam," "tell me what you have found in the land?"

"Nothing at all, Mr. Tapplebot," replies the lady, "except my money, which I have got back, and I am very glad to get it."

"Uncle Sam," who is at first stupefied, finally becomes so struck with admiration for the cunning Mrs. Bellamy that he offers her his hand. The lady, however, informs him frankly that she would prefer no further dealings with him after the land purchase.

Affairs must be regulated between Sarah and Robert. Mrs. Bellamy wishes to get her countryman out of the claws of these adventurers; she comes to them to demonstrate that he could not be held because there is no promise of marriage.

"You are mistaken," says Sarah, who enters unperceived; "here is his promise of marriage on my ball programme." Turning to Robert she says, "But I will not hold you to it. I would spare you the humiliation of seeing you, a French gentleman, deny your own signature before American judges. I will tear your promise," and she tears it in two and throws it at his feet. "It is I who have released you. Go. I never wish to see you more."

Robert in despair determines to be revenged on Fairfax, the disappointed lover, who, in order to win the hand of Sarah, has devised the trap in which Robert is caught. Robert provokes him and pursues him into the saloon of

the hotel, where he insults him publicly. What the playwright calls "an American duel" then follows. Fairfax seizes his revolver; the two adversaries begin firing on the grand staircase. Fairfax fires at Robert, whom he misses; the bullet shatters a large mirror on the first floor. Sarah throws herself upon Robert, shields him with her body, and pushes him into her own room. Fairfax, on the other hand, is pushed into her room by Mrs. Bellamy, who locks the door, and only releases him under condition of disarmament.

Robert finally marries Sarah, and takes her back to France. Mrs. Bellamy accompanies them, only too happy to take back to Europe the money she got back from the boom town. As for Colonel Nathaniel, Belle leaves him, saying he is "no good," gets a divorce, and remarries Elliott, her first husband.

ODETTE

IN speaking of Sardou's Villa at Nice M. Jules Claretie says that in "Odette," when produced at the Vaudeville, the playwright introduced a part of the magnificent panorama seen from the rock of Monthuron, on which his villa stands. Like Sardou, the Parisian audience looked on the blue Mediterranean, and they, too, saw the magnificent Corniche Road winding among the olive trees, with which, as well as with villas, the flanks of the hills are covered. It is curious, as showing Sardou's passion for accurate detail, that he had a number of photographs taken in and around his villa in order to reproduce accurately this bit of the Riviera on the Vaudeville stage at Paris. While "Odette" was being thus carefully placed on the stage, "Divorçons" had just turned its three hundredth night and the Academy was electing Sardou to one of its forty chairs.

Sardou's love for Nice, his winter home, was natural. His infancy and childhood were passed there. There still exists a little dam built by him as a boy in a garden owned near Nice by one of his aunts. And he was fond of telling, how, once, when he was nine years old, he rode behind his grandfather, a veteran in the wane of the Republic and the Empire, through a vast marsh across which dimly twinkled the lights of a little town. This little town on the farther side of the marsh was Nice. The horse sunk so deeply into the marsh that the child's feet dragged on the ground as he clung to his grandfather's belt. This marsh to-day is the new or modern part of Nice—the Nice of wealth, of luxury, of fine boulevards like the Champs-Élysées—the Nice of queer princesses, of doubtful generals, of apocryphal ambassadors—in short, the Nice of "Odette."

The play begins with an unpleasant discovery by the Count de Clermont-Latour. He has made a love-match with a woman much younger than himself, a young lady whose first name is Odette, but whose last name no one seems to know—that is, her paternal name. The young lady's mother has a reputation for not having any reputation in particular, but, in opposition to the advice of his elder brother, the General, the Count has taken the imprudent step of wedding the daughter, a young woman who is coquettish, a spendthrift, and without principle. The inevitable happens. The Count returns unexpectedly to his Château Bretigny at midnight. He surprises young Monsieur Cardaillan introducing himself clandestinely into the Countess's boudoir with a key. The facts are clear and unmistakable. The Count does not hesitate as to his course. He immediately summons the governess of his three-year-old daughter Bérangère.

"Take away my child," he tells her, "and conduct her at once to my brother, the General."

As soon as the child is safely away with her governess, the Count summons his wife Odette. "You are a miserable wretch," he cries, "leave my house at once."

Odette does not defend herself as a woman, but as a mother she resists. She demands that he shall not separate her from her daughter. But the Count remains inflexible, and Odette at last yields and departs, hurling as a farewell word at her husband the epithet "coward!"

With the opening of the second act, fourteen years have elapsed. The Count has reared his daughter with the most touching solicitude. He has assumed toward her almost the place of mother. She has been told that her mother was drowned while boating at Trouville.

The young girl Bérangère is on the eve of wedding a young man whom she loves, M. de Meyran. But an obstacle to this match arises, which Bérangère did not look for. If

her mother is dead to her world, she is by no means dead to the world of Paris. On the contrary, for those who know the giddy circles of that city, she is very much alive.

Madame de Meyran, the grandmother of the young girl's lover, hesitates to give her consent, or rather she makes it conditional. She demands that if she consents to the marriage the Countess Odette will enter into an agreement never to return to Paris, and to lay aside forever the name of Countess de Clermont.

Although this demand may seem harsh, it is, in reality, moderate when it is known what Odette has become. After the judicial separation which deprives her of the care of her daughter, the Countess had lived some time with her seducer, Cardaillan. After this, she became the mistress of the Prince Reuss-Graetz, and led with him a luxurious existence in Vienna. From Vienna and the young Prince Reuss-Graetz, Odette went to Naples to live with the old Prince Rospoli. After the death of her old Prince she fell into the arms of an adventurer who passed under the name of the Viscount de Frontenac. It is, therefore, not remarkable that Madame de Meyran should not be overjoyed at the prospect of presenting her grandson with such a mother-in-law as the Countess Odette.

The piece, therefore, turns upon the question whether Odette will consent to lay aside the title of Countess de Clermont in order to assure the happiness of her daughter Bérangère, whom she has not seen for fourteen years.

The Count, his daughter, and her lover, M. de Meyran, have gone to Nice for the carnival. Chance leads to the same city the Countess Odette and her lover. They become the guests of a charlatan, one Oliva, who calls himself a doctor, but whose genuine profession is to keep a swell gambling house. The Countess Odette acts as hostess in this gilded den, where young lambs, the sons of rich man-

ufacturing fathers, allow themselves to be sheared closely by gentlemen "of industry."

One of these, her partner Frontenac, is so clumsy as to allow himself to be detected in cheating at baccarat. Odette is at first terrified and then furious at this discovery; hurling the playing cards into the face of Frontenac, she drives him from the room, calling him a thief. Then, when the "guests" have departed from this embarrassing scene, she bursts into tears and cries:

"To think of a woman like myself sinking into this pool of iniquity! Yet who will give me a helping hand?"

"I will, if you will permit me," replies a voice. It is Count Clermont, who has come to pay a visit to his ex-wife.

It is not a pleasant meeting. The Count offers to pay Odette's debts and to double her allowance if she complies with the conditions required by Madame de Meyran. But Odette refuses to lay aside the name which she has borne since her marriage. It is all that remains to her, she insists, and she will keep it. When the Count endeavours to move her by appealing to her maternal love, Odette replies:

"My daughter? I do not know her, since you have stolen her from me, but I love her still. I wish to see her, to speak with her, to have her know her mother's face."

"You shall not! I defy you!" he replies.

This scene between the husband and his former wife, while painful, is a powerful one. The Count at last is defeated, and in order to prevent a scandal, yields to the wishes of Odette. She is presented to her daughter as a lady who was a friend of the late Countess Clermont.

In the interview between the degraded Odette and the innocent daughter, the young girl does not suspect that the woman before her is her mother. Bérangère shows to the strange lady little relics of her dead mother—a lock of hair, a ball programme, and some trinkets. She weeps as

she tells the strange lady of the many virtues of her mother, of whom the Count has always spoken as the best and most amiable of women.

This touching proof of the paternal delicacy of the Count de Clermont begins to disturb the heart of the wicked Odette. She has come to reveal herself and to claim her maternal rights from her daughter, but now she hesitates.

"There are separations more cruel than death," she falters. "I know in this city a lady who for many years has lived apart from her husband and her daughter. The law has separated them."

"She must be a bad woman, then," cries Bérangère.

"She is unfortunate rather than bad," replies Odette.

"Has she never tried to see her husband again?" asks Bérangère.

"She does not wish to see him."

"And her child?"

"Her child has been taken from her by the law."

"Then," says Bérangère, "the law believes she is not a good mother."

"The law is in error."

"But if she did nothing to recover her child, and if the law took the father's side, she must have been wrong. But let us not talk of this bad woman—let us speak of my dear mother."

"No!" cries Odette, breaking into violent weeping, "let us speak no more of her. She is dead."

After this painful interview, Odette, despairing of any happiness in life, drowns herself.

LES VIEUX GARÇONS

THE play begins in the château of the de Chavenays, a couple who have been married only a year and a half. Visiting them are the du Bourgs and the de Troenes, also newly married couples. The three ladies are deploring the neglect of their husbands, one of whom is fond of shooting, another of gambling, and another of actresses. As the matrons are mutually condoling, Antoinette de Chavenay, an unmarried sister of the master of the house, enters. She listens in astonishment to their attacks upon marriage, which are interrupted by the entrance of a servant with the card of a certain M. de Mortemer. The married ladies look at one another significantly. He is an elderly bachelor, who has had many affairs with ladies of the best society. He is not acquainted with the mistress of the house. None the less, she decides to admit him, as there must be some special reason for his visit.

Mortemer enters. He introduces himself as a country neighbour, the possessor of the adjacent château, and tells a moving tale to explain his visit. Some poor peasants have had their cottage burned, and lost their little all. He is getting up a subscription among the rich families of the neighbourhood, and all he asks is the assistance of these ladies. They accede to his wishes, and intrust to the charitable Mortemer their gifts for the poor family. Mortemer does not leave at once, but remains for a quarter of an hour; he dazzles and fascinates them all by his wit, his brilliancy, his charm—from the most worldly matron to the innocent *ingénue*, Antoinette.

But the men are returning from their shooting. The first two to arrive are Clavières, another elderly bachelor, and de Nantya, a young man who takes a deep interest in

Antoinette. Clavières, who is an old crony of Mortemer's, is surprised to see him at the de Chavenays', and asks him how he comes to be there.

"I am getting up a subscription for a poor family who have been burned out—a sick father and four children," replies Mortemer modestly. "I hope you will give something, Clavières." And as Clavières hesitates, Mortemer goes on: "Four children, I tell you, and the wife is in an interesting condition."

"Come, come," interrupts Clavières, "here's your money. Take it quick or there'll be twins in a minute." Then sotto voce he adds, "See here, old man, you have got to give this back. I take no stock in your fake fires."

But de Nantya is even more incredulous than Clavières, who is a Parisian. De Nantya lives in the neighbourhood. He interrogates Mortemer closely as to the name of the family, their occupation, and where they live, much to the discomfiture of that clever gentleman. But Mortemer succeeds in evading detailed answers, and goes out with Clavières and Veaucourtois, who with him make up the trio of Vieux Garçons.

When the three bachelors are together, Mortemer interrogates Clavières closely about the three couples, all of them lately married, it would seem. The questioning is of a most pointed nature, and the bachelors frankly express a desire to encroach upon the marital preserves of their neighbours—with the exception, that is, of Veaucourtois, who is represented as a wreck. They decide that they will wait until the ladies return to Paris for the winter season. It is already the end of autumn.

In the next act, we are in Paris. De Nantya has come up from the provinces, and calls upon de Chavenay to demand the hand of his sister Antoinette. De Chavenay receives his suit most cordially. De Nantya, however, tells him he has an avowal to make—it is that the name of

Nantya is only the name of his estate. His mother had left him, with her large fortune, this estate, which bore her maiden name. It was all the name she left him, as he was an illegitimate son, and she would not tell him who his father was. He makes this avowal with much embarrassment, but De Chavenay reassures him, and tells him that an honourable man can do honour to any name.

When this interview is over they go to the salon, where the three matrons are again assembled. The ladies are discussing Mortemer, who has become a valued friend to all, it would appear. For Mme. du Bourg, he has induced the Prefect of Paris to cut down a tree, which obstructed the view from her window. For Mme. de Chavenay he has secured a famous Indian stuff which she had sought for vainly in all the shops of Paris. He has found a rare portrait for du Bourg, who is an enthusiastic collector. He has discovered a profitable coal-mine for de Chavenay, who is an ardent speculator. While they are talking of this invaluable friend, he enters, and is greeted most cordially by all. But the brilliant Mortemer is discomfited by the sight of de Nantya, of whom he has no pleasant recollection. He is so silent that it excites general wonder.

"What is the matter?" asks Mme. de Chavenay.

"No new stories?" cries Mme. de Troenes.

"No new gossip?" demands Mme. du Bourg.

"And no new—er—fires?" asks M. de Nantya.

Mortemer looks at him with a disagreeable expression, but does not reply. As the conversation continues, de Nantya more than once interrupts Mortemer in a manner which shows that there is bad blood between the two men.

The three bachelors, who occupy apartments in the same house, have a large salon, which they use in common for a reception-room. The following morning, Mortemer, going from his chamber into the salon, there meets Clavières, who is coming in covered with snow, and in an execrable temper.

He informs Mortemer, who is surprised at his early promenade, that he has been waiting for Mme. du Bourg in the Luxembourg Garden, where she had made an appointment with him at that unearthly hour. He had begun an affair with her, and she had written him two letters; but she had suddenly become alarmed, and was making appointments with him all over Paris, demanding that he return her letters. This morning's appointment she has failed to keep. Clavières intimates that he is growing weary of the lady, and will endeavour to terminate his flirtation.

Veaucourtois, the senile bachelor, enters at this moment, and informs Clavières that in order to get one of the husbands out of the way the night before, he had inveigled him to a supper with some actresses; there, the truant, de Troenes, got so tipsy that Veaucourtois was afraid to take him home, and therefore brought him to their quarters. De Troenes is still there asleep, and has been so for many hours; hence, Veaucourtois had been obliged to leave word with Mme. de Troenes where her husband was, for fear she should think some ill had befallen him.

A servant announces a gentleman and two ladies. It is Mme. de Chavenay and Mme. du Bourg, accompanied by de Nantya. They have come to inquire after de Troenes, and are informed that he is still asleep. They depart, agreeing to send some clothing for him by the hands of de Nantya, in order to prevent the servants from learning his condition. De Nantya is shown a back staircase, by which he may enter and thus attract less attention with his bundle of clothing.

Scarcely has this group gone, when Clavières receives a card which causes him to ask his friends to vacate the salon—which they do. It is the card of Mme. du Bourg, who speedily enters. She is in a state of great agitation, and tells Clavières she had written him a letter to say she could not keep her appointment at the Luxembourg. He

shivers at the thought of the snowy rendezvous. She goes on to say that she had just carefully addressed and sealed this letter when Antoinette de Chavenay called in her sister's carriage to take Mme. du Bourg shopping, they having agreed to go together. They went from the "Bon Marché," she remembers, to the "Louvre," from the "Louvre" to the "Printemps." There she suddenly remembered that she had not yet posted her letter. She hunted for it—it was gone! She ransacked the carriage fruitlessly; she went back to her house; there her maid told her she had seen M. du Bourg take a letter from her desk; her husband gazed at it suspiciously for a long time, then frowned, put it in his pocket, and went out. Mme. du Bourg hysterically tells Clavières that all is lost, their affair is discovered, and nothing is left for them but to die together. At this point she presents him with a small bottle of laudanum, which he tosses into the fire. He tells her that she is probably mistaken—the letter must have been lost in one of the large shops, and if they will hasten there, he is certain they will find it in one of them. He urges her to accompany him at once by the rear exit.

"But," she tells him, "Antoinette is waiting for me in the carriage below; she thinks I am visiting my physician here."

"Very well," responds Clavières, "I will send my servant to tell her to wait for you no longer."

As they go out together, Mortemer suddenly emerges from his chamber, and bids the servant, instead of giving this message, to say to the lady in the carriage, "Will madame please come up, as Mme. du Bourg is waiting for her upstairs?"

In a few moments Antoinette enters, and tranquilly greets Mortemer. She asks for Mme. du Bourg. Mortemer replies that she is still with her physician, and will join Antoinette in a few moments. He then attempts with

devilish art to arouse the young girl's curiosity concerning the forbidden side of Paris life. It is evident from his conversation that he doubts her innocence. Her answers only bring from him hidden sneers, and as he talks to her of matters which to her are utterly incomprehensible, the frank gaze of her innocent eyes is mistaken by him for boldness. He asks her whether she has heard the married women speak of him as a roué; she admits she does not know what a roué may be, and asks him what it means. She tells him the married women call him a bad man, but as he is so kind and fatherly to her, she cannot believe that he is bad. When the innocent Antoinette thus receives his evil approaches, the veteran libertine is disarmed; he grows heartily ashamed of himself.

"So you have looked upon me as a father?" he says. "Then I shall look upon you as a daughter. Go, my child, go—leave this place at once."

As she goes out the sound of a struggle is heard, and the door bursts open. It is de Nantya struggling with Clavières, who is endeavouring to prevent him from entering. With much excitement de Nantya informs Mortemer that he has learned of Mademoiselle de Chavenay's presence in the room, and that she must have just left it.

Mortemer coldly replies: "I do not know, sir, by what right you claim to interrogate me."

De Nantya hesitates. "Only declare to me on your honour that Mademoiselle de Chavenay has not been here," he says, "and I will interrogate you no further."

To this Mortemer replies: "In view of your excited condition, sir, I will so far humour you as to assure you that I was alone."

As he speaks a servant enters, saying: "The young lady forgot her veil, sir." Seeing it on a chair he picks it up and hurries out.

"Ah, scoundrel," cries de Nantya, "you have lied to me,

but I shall kill you for this," and with a cry of rage he hastens after Antoinette.

In the next scene we find Mortemer in his apartment. It is daybreak. The light of a lamp falls on papers and letters in confusion, scattered over the large table. The clock strikes. He looks up. "What, five o'clock already!" He throws some papers in the fire. "No matter how often a man fights," he muses, "the night before is never a calm one. Talk as we may of our dashing ancestors, who drew sword on the instant and fell to fighting under a dim street lamp. That was easier than the strain on the nerves caused by reflecting over a duel the night before. Clavières is right—we are growing old. The last time I fought, four years ago, I did not take so much trouble over my papers. But why do I now? I have no heirs. No brother, no sister, no child. And if I come back in a few hours, with a sword-wound, who will weep at my bedside if I die? No one. Ah, Mortemer, the life you have led has been a merry one, but it is having a melancholy ending. And of all your loves there remain only six drawers full of yellowing letters." He picks up one at random and reads it:

"Will you ever know, my dear one, how deep my love for you has been? Perhaps some day you may, when it is ended, and when you shall seek for a name at the end of this letter without remembering her who wrote it."

He stops, and looks at the end of the letter. "She is right. I do not remember, but there is neither name nor date." He goes on reading: *"I knew all this in advance. My reason told it me. Yet I love you so dearly that I forget it when I see you, and when I remember it I only love you the more."*

"Poor woman! I wonder who she was? No name. Nothing but this seal." He is closely inspecting the seal by the lamplight, when he is interrupted by Clavières, who comes to tell him that the seconds have been unable to bring

about any arrangement, and the duel is to take place. De Nantya's seconds are du Bourg and de Chavenay. Although de Chavenay is the brother of Antoinette, he is ignorant of the cause of the duel, and de Nantya, in a note, begs Mortemer to keep it a secret. The pretext is a quarrel over a bet.

Mortemer starts as he looks at de Nantya's letter. The seal is the same as that upon the old love-letter lying on the table. He shows it to Clavières. They are both astonished: the seals are identical, the arms are the same.

The servant announces de Chavenay and du Bourg. They have come to say that the duel must take place at another rendezvous, as the first chosen is the scene of a hunt that day. They are ready to start at once, as de Nantya is waiting for them in a carriage below. But Mortemer detains de Chavenay—he asks to know de Nantya's real name. De Chavenay for a long time evades replying, till finally Mortemer says that he shall insist upon knowing whom he fights. De Chavenay sneers at these scruples on the eve of the duel. Mortemer recalls to him that a man who has already fought six times need not fear an accusation of cowardice. Here de Chavenay, in a tone of warning, points out that a refusal to fight with his principal reflects upon him. Mortemer replies that he will be more than happy to cross swords with M. de Chavenay, but that he must refuse to fight M. de Chavenay's principal until he learns his name.

De Chavenay withdraws for a moment to consult with du Bourg. They decide that they must tell the truth. They inform Mortemer that de Nantya is the name of their principal's estate, for he has no legal name, as he is illegitimate; his mother had steadfastly refused to reveal to him his father's name; her own name was de Rilly. Mortemer staggers as if shot.

Just as this avowal has been made to him, the door opens, and de Nantya, weary of waiting, appears. He cross-questions his seconds, and they tell him what they have done. He approves of their action.

"And now, gentlemen, as everything is to your satisfaction," says de Nantya, "let us leave for the field." To the stupefaction of everyone, Mortemer says calmly: "I refuse." His seconds, Clavières and Veaucourtois, plead with him, but he is obdurate. The other seconds confer with them, but Mortemer will listen to no one. De Nantya is with difficulty restrained from attacking Mortemer. He has even lifted his hand to slap Mortemer's face, when his own seconds bear him back. Foaming with rage, de Nantya is forced from the room by his seconds, denouncing Mortemer, and shouting at him: "Coward! coward!—coward with women, coward with men!"

As the door closes between them, Clavières cries, "What can be the matter? How can you submit to such insults? Are you mad?"

To which the unhappy Mortemer replies: "Mad? No, I wish I were. My punishment is not madness, it is another cross. That young man is my son!"

In the last act matters are arranged between the penitent husband de Troenes and his wife. He has had enough of actresses' suppers, and swears never to wander from the conjugal hearth again. Mme. du Bourg, who has been much exercised over her lost letter, is also relieved from her mental travail. The husbands and wives are again assembled in the salon of the de Chavenays. M. du Bourg takes a paper from his pocketbook, and says to Clavières, gazing significantly at his wife:

"I have something for you."

Mme. du Bourg turns pale.

"For me?" says Clavières in a faltering voice.

"Yes," says du Bourg, "a letter."

"Great Heavens!" murmurs Mme. du Bourg, trembling, "I am lost."

"Yes," says du Bourg, "I found it on my wife's desk, where she had forgotten it. It bears your name."

"Then, sir," says Clavières, "since it is evident that you know what it is——"

"Of course I do," says du Bourg. "It is some of those charity concert tickets. She's always sending them to her friends. I've kept it for two days, and thus saved you fifty francs, for the concerts are now over. Take it, my boy." And as he hands it to Clavières, both that dangerous bachelor and the giddy matron breathe more freely.

At this point de Nantya enters, and asks permission to speak privately with Antoinette. He asks her what took place at her interview with Mortemer. She tells him frankly. While they are still conversing, Mortemer is announced. He asks to speak with the lovers; they tell him they are about to wed. He wishes them a happy wedded life, and then he puts a hypothetical case before them. It is that of a father who had abandoned his child and abandoned its mother. He asks if there could be any possible pardon for such a man. De Nantya shakes his head. Mortemer says, in a low voice: "I am condemned," and turns to go. But Antoinette is more tender-hearted than de Nantya. She pleads for the unknown father who deserted his child. Her eloquence finally moves de Nantya, who remembers that the last words of his dying mother were, "Always forgive." "Feeling as I do now, I could pardon such a man," he adds, "even were he my father."

"Then you can pardon me," says Mortemer in a broken voice, "for you are my son."

ANDRÉA

THE scene is laid in Vienna, one of the gayest of continental capitals. The first act introduces us to the Count and Countess von Toeplitz. They are young, handsome, and rich. What more is needed to make them happy? The Countess Andréa adores her husband. The Count Stéphan seems infatuated with his Countess. Nevertheless, the two spouses live almost separate lives. The Countess Andréa goes ever into the world of gaiety, where she shines without apparently arousing the jealousy of the Count. On his side, Count Stéphan acts as if he were a bachelor, and passes his evenings at the opera or at the club. This life he finds extremely agreeable—it has all the charms of marriage without its burdens. The young Countess sighs at times over their divergent ways, but nothing has yet come to disturb her happiness.

Suddenly a bolt drops from the blue. One Birschmann, a jeweller, calls, and is anxious to speak to the Count. As it is her birthday, Andréa is convinced that her husband is preparing a surprise for her. Yielding to her curiosity, she persuades the jeweller to show her a certain mysterious object which he has in a jewel-case. The indiscreet Birschmann yields. It is a magnificent bracelet with an intricate design in diamonds—an “S” crowned with a star.

What can this “S” mean, when the Countess is called Andréa? What does the star symbolise? The luckless jeweller is much embarrassed, but remembers that the Count told him the star was an allusion to a Latin word. There are dictionaries on the shelves of the library, and the Countess feverishly searches for the Latin word for “star.” She finds that it is *Stella*. So her rival is called “*Stella*.”

Who is Stella? She is indeed a star. Stella is the leading dancer of the opera at Vienna. Andréa quickly divines that her husband is false to her. She determines to learn to what extent. The dancer's dress-maker is a sister of the jeweller. Thanks to these minor relationships, the Countess shall see her enemy face to face.

In the next scene we are in the dressing-room of the ballet-dancer. "Behind the Scenes" is a favourite scene with dramatists. Stella's dressing-room is continually invaded by young men of fashion, call-boys, prompters, stage-managers, and maids. In the midst of them all sits Monsieur Rabnum, an American manager with a long beard. From in front are heard thunders of applause; the spectators are recalling their divinity. Finally, in comes Stella, in her ballet costume, to receive the homage of her little court.

Into the dressing-room penetrates the young Countess Andréa, who is disguised as an assistant sent by Stella's dress-maker. But poor Andréa does not know what she is to encounter. Judge of her emotion when she hears her husband's voice without; he is knocking at Stella's door. Despite his supplications, the ballet-dancer bids him be off, as she is busy. She suddenly notices that the little dress-maker is pale and apparently fainting. Stella is filled with sympathy, and interrogates her. She finds that the little dress-maker is mad with jealousy over a recreant lover. So Stella gives her some ballet-dancer's philosophy, bidding her have no confidence in any man. "Why, that fellow who has just been knocking at the door, and whom I sent away, is a rich nobleman. He has a charming wife, and yet he swears to me that he would leave her at once on a word from me. Come, I'll call him back, just to show you what creatures men are." So she conceals the poor little weeping Countess behind a screen.

Count Stéphan enters. He vows his undying love; he

laments Stella's coldness. As she is about leaving for Bucharest, he swears he will follow her—that very night, at three hours after midnight, he will join her on the Danube steamer. The Countess, dazed by such perfidy, is possessed of but one thought—that of preventing at all costs the flight of her Stéphan.

In the next scene the Baron de Kaulben, minister of police, has just returned to his house after leaving the opera. This high personage exercises his delicate functions with much urbanity and humour. As he is about to seek the repose needful after a laborious day, a veiled lady presents herself on urgent business. It is the Baroness Thècle, a friend of Andréa. The Baroness fears blackmail by a pretended General Cracovero, half Peruvian and half Greek. He is an adventurer, a swindler, and at times a police spy. He holds some compromising letters written by her. The minister of police reassures her, for General Cracovero is not only in the police service, but in the meshes of the police as well. The minister promises the Baroness that she shall have her letters, and in a transport of joy she fairly hugs the minister for his trouble.

In the scene which follows, the Countess Andréa seeks his aid. The gallant Baron is much moved by the appeal of the Countess, but he is obliged to tell her that the law does nothing for ladies whose husbands desert the conjugal roof with pretty actresses. Still, an idea occurs to the good-hearted minister. "Your husband," says he, "is acting like a madman, and I shall treat him as such. He is about to return home to make his preparations for flight. It is now your business to keep him there. If you do not succeed, flash a light out over the portal. My detectives will be posted there, and your husband will be detained for some hours—long enough to let Stella leave for Bucharest—and alone."

In the next act, the Countess Andréa, rendered even more charming by excitement and jealousy, endeavours to keep Count Stéphan from leaving her. The Count struggles desperately. He heaps lie upon lie. He devises a duel, he pleads a headache, he contrives a business journey. As the Countess refuses to believe any of these stories, he simply escapes into the night. At first she cannot believe that he would thus leave her, but the advice of the minister of police occurs to her, and she displays a light from the window.

In the next scene we find the dashing Count Stéphan fretting like a caged beast in an asylum for lunatics. Not in the least understanding his misadventure, he writes to all his friends. One of them, Balthazar, comes to the asylum to see him. Balthazar had been present the night before at a farewell supper given to Stella, whence, being flushed with wine, he had walked home with Stéphan. In his intoxication he saw, or thought he saw, a man furtively getting into Stéphan's house, and he relates to Stéphan his nocturnal vision. This plunges the Count into a condition very like genuine madness. He thinks no more of Stella, but only of Andréa. Can it be possible that his little wife is unfaithful? In the twinkling of an eye he seizes the hat and long winter cloak of Balthazar, and thrusting that young man into his cell, goes forth into the street.

The last scene it is easy to guess. Stéphan's unfounded jealousy leads to explanations, to repentance, to a reconciliation, and the curtain falls on a reunited couple.

NOS INTIMES¹

It was in "Nos Intimes" that Sardou presented, for the first time, his favourite character—that of a man of middle age, sometimes a professor, frequently a physician; a man who knows everything, sees everything, betrays nothing; who is a marvel of tact and discretion; who reunites the embroiled husband and wife; who brings together the quarrelling lovers; who destroys the tell-tale letter—who, in a word, performs all the acts which the ancient dramatists entrusted to a *deus ex machinâ*. In "Nos Intimes" this Admirable Crichton is Dr. Tholosan.

Caussade is a wealthy retired Parisian, living in a fine country-place, with a young wife who is but little older than his daughter Benjamine. Maurice, a handsome young man, is spending some time at Caussade's place, convalescing from an illness. He utilises his leisure by falling in love with Cécile, the wife of his friend, Caussade. This lady takes a romantic interest in him, but has not yet realised the danger of being interested in good-looking young men convalescing from fevers.

In the first act there is a sentimental scene between Cécile and Maurice, which that young man craftily works up to a dramatic finish by feigning to faint. Fortunately, Dr. Tholosan is at hand, and comes in response to Cécile's cries for help. He at once sends her to his room for a restorative medicine, and he is left alone with the unconscious lover:

THOLOSAN [*taking MAURICE's glass of lemonade*].—Now, if you please, open the right eye. . . . [*He drinks the lemonade.*] And then the left. . . . [*He drinks.*] And now, get up and walk. . . .

¹ Best-known English versions, "Bosom Friends," "Friends or Foes," "Boon Companions," "Peril," "A Wife's Peril."

MAURICE [*opening his eyes*—Tholosan, I assure you— . . .
[*He jumps up.*]

THOLOSAN [*emptying the glass*—There, that's the movement I want.

MAURICE—You demon of a doctor, you. It is no joke to be ill with you around. But, nevertheless, I assure you, it was a genuine fainting spell—on my word of honour, it was!

THOLOSAN—Really? [*Puts on his eye-glass and inspects MAURICE carefully.*]

MAURICE—The heat of the sun, you know, when a man is just up from a sick-bed. Well, what are you looking at me for? Don't you know that I am just recovering from an illness?

THOLOSAN—Yes. [*He continues to sip the lemonade.*]

MAURICE—And that my illness was caused by a love affair? To prove it, let me tell you that I have a dreadful chill which seizes me every other day at noon, and which lasts until five o'clock, the hour at which we used to have our rendezvous. It is the fever of regret—the fever of love.

THOLOSAN—Nonsense! It's fever and ague.

MAURICE—Fever and ague! No. It is an affection of the heart caused by disappointment in love.

THOLOSAN—Pooh! It's nothing but a mild case of chills and fever caught on the marshes of the River Marne while fishing.

MAURICE—Go to the devil!

THOLOSAN [*patting him on the shoulder*—My dear Maurice, you are a very nice young chap, but you have one great fault. It is to take Dr. Tholosan for an ass. Now, I am not an ass. I used to be an animal, of course, in my previous existence, as all men were.

MAURICE—Ah, there's your fad.

THOLOSAN—But that existence has left no trace upon my present individuality, and I defy you to decide by the examination of my skull what species of animal I may have been.

MAURICE—Well, I don't know what you used to be, but what you are—

THOLOSAN [*taking MAURICE'S head and turning it in profile*—While, as for you, it is only necessary to measure with a practiced glance this brain, rounded at the vertex and over-developed at the occiput, this keen, round eye, this nose solidly set upon the face by the broad expanse of the nostrils—it is only necessary for me to discern in your present humanity all the characteristics of your former animality.

MAURICE—Indeed? I would not be sorry to know what I used to be.

THOLOSAN—Very well, then, you shall know. You used to be a sparrow.

MAURICE—A sparrow?

THOLOSAN—Yes, a sparrow. That is to say, a creature which is greedy, keen-witted, impudent, bold, thievish, and lascivious.

MAURICE—Thank you.

THOLOSAN—I said lascivious.

MAURICE—Yes, I heard you.

THOLOSAN—As for the rest, one of the best creatures in the world, if it were not for his odious habit of creeping into the other birds' nests.

MAURICE—I don't know what you mean when you talk about sparrows.

THOLOSAN—It is because you have never studied the habits of birds, my boy. All you have to do, however, is to look around this house. You will find here a nest of swallows into which has squeezed himself a travelling sparrow. He came on a stormy night, sick, tired, and with a broken wing. The swallows treated him hospitably, made room for him, gave him for his bed the softest down and for his nourishment the most delicate grains. While the hospitable male swallow goes forth into the field to look for seeds, the convalescing sparrow, fat and hearty, relates to the lady swallow his trials and his tribulations. The lady swallow has a soft heart. She pities him. The sparrow weeps. Tenderly, with her little claw, she wipes his eyes. His tears flow more freely. She wipes them with the tip of her wing. The crafty fellow faints. She doesn't know what to do. She fears he is going to die. She timidly extends first her claw, then her wing, at last her beak.

MAURICE—Well, what does all this mean?

THOLOSAN—Mean? Why, nothing, of course.

MAURICE—Well, where did you learn all this you are telling me? Where did you see it?

THOLOSAN—In this lemonade. It is the adorable privilege of woman always to do things better for a lover than for a husband. Did you ever notice the difference in the slippers made for the husband and the other? Now, this lemonade, made for Sparrow, is delicious. It is exactly right. Just enough sugar, just enough lemon-juice, not a single lemon-pip in the bottom. Yet, if it were made for Caussade, he might have choked himself with lemon-pips.

MAURICE—Some one has been talking to you—talking about her and me. I insist on knowing who it is.

THOLOSAN—Who? Why, certainly. She.

MAURICE—She?

THOLOSAN—Yes; and you.

MAURICE—I? What have I said?

THOLOSAN—Why, you have been babbling for a quarter of an hour, and you have told me all I wanted to know. Does that astonish you? Were you so unsuspecting? Why, my dear fellow, there are three kinds of confessors—the priest, the judge, and the physician. The priest never knows all, precisely because people tell him all, and there is a fashion of telling things which minimises them. The judge knows a little more, because people lie to him, and he has only to assume the exact opposite of what they tell him to divine all that they do not tell him. As to the doctor, my boy, . . . he comes in, takes out his watch, looks at your tongue, punches you in the midriff, and talks to you about neuralgia, gastralgia, and all that sort of thing, and you reply to him, talking about fatigue, *ennui*, misery, debauch, and that tired feeling. And when he puts his watch back in his pocket, he knows all, because you tried to tell him nothing, and in trying to tell him nothing you succeeded in concealing nothing.

MAURICE [*sneeringly*].—Indeed!

THOLOSAN—And now do you wish me to feel the pulse of your fever and tell you where you stand?

MAURICE [*still sneeringly*].—Yes; where are we, sorcerer?

THOLOSAN—At the third period.

MAURICE—Already?

THOLOSAN—Yes, already. At the *First Period*, or *Sympathetic Period*, there are sweet and melting glances; reciprocal and instinctive quests for one another; pressures of the hand slightly prolonged; temperature normal. This period manifests itself, say, about Monday evening in reading together a romance, and may last up to, say, Wednesday morning, when you will have entered into the *Second Period*, or *Magnetic Period*: in this the glances are much more earnest, with a certain moisture about the eyes; tendency of the heads to incline together; a heightening of the colour is noticeable; the hand-pressure now is humid, about the temperature of a conservatory, at times slightly interrupted when the lady quickly retires her fingers as if shocked by an electric battery. This new state may prolong itself from Wednesday to Saturday morning, which is to-day, when you have entered into the *Third Period*, or

Angelic Period, characterised by shivers and shudders, genuine or affected, solemn oaths to confine this attachment to a pure, disinterested, and angelic affection forever; such phrases as "I will be your sister," "You shall be my brother," and the abuse of the words "friend," "friendly," "friendship," characterise this period. It is now accompanied by glances which do not stop, and hand-pressures at about the temperature of a boiled egg. This state will probably be prolonged until to-morrow evening, when you will enter into the *Philosopho-ecstatico-mystico Period*. Isn't that about it?

MAURICE—You are the devil!

THOLOSAN—The devil! It is you who are the devil, you seducer of married women! I knew you in pre-historic times in the Garden of Eden. In those days you were a serpent, and you were picking apples with Mme. Caussade, who was a blonde lady. I was a mosquito, and I was biting the nose of Caussade, who was snoring. He is the only one who has not changed. He is snoring still.

Tholosan, the middle-aged physician, is in love with Caussade's eighteen-year-old daughter Benjamine. Tholosan is naturally interested in checking the sentimental passion of Cécile and Maurice, partly out of regard for his friend, Caussade, partly because he loves the daughter. He determines to protect Caussade's conjugal peace by getting Maurice to leave. But Maurice refuses, and this scene ensues:

THOLOSAN—I warn you, now, that I am a declared champion of the husband.

MAURICE [*sneeringly*—As friend of the husband or of the wife?

THOLOSAN—Of neither. Caussade is not my friend, and therefore I am not making love to his wife. But as I am soon to enter into matrimony I am naturally an ally of the state of matrimony. Besides, Caussade is weak and good-natured, and his wife is weak and foolish. She may be false to him. These are the reasons why I enroll myself on his side.

MAURICE—That means, I suppose, that you will warn him?

THOLOSAN—No, indeed; it is the dear friends—"Nos Intimes"—who do that, of whom I am not one. No, I will play fair. Here comes Mme. Caussade. Be off.

[THOLOSAN *pretends to be writing in a note-book as CÉCILE approaches.*]

CÉCILE—Doctor! [*anxiously*.] Doctor, are you writing a prescription?

THOLOSAN—Exactly. A prescription.

CÉCILE—For Maurice? I mean for Monsieur Maurice?

THOLOSAN—Yes, for Maurice.

CÉCILE [*anxiously*].—Is he not doing well? He looks very well, doctor.

THOLOSAN [*shaking his head*].—Ah, poor fellow, he looks well, but he is in a very dangerous condition. I have just been auscultating him, and I find that he has one of those frightfully abnormal hearts. It is possible for him to live to be seventy or eighty if he is careful, but he must avoid shocks and emotions. Above all, he must avoid a declaration of love. Why, my dear madame, a sudden movement to put his arm around a woman, to hurl himself on his knees at her feet, to say, "I love you"—why, in his condition he might never get up! It gives me goose-flesh to think of it.

CÉCILE—Oh, doctor, this is horrible. Are you not mistaken?

THOLOSAN—Unfortunately, no. If he utters to a woman the words, "I love you," it will be his death-warrant.

In the midst of this interesting and intriguing family circle there descends a batch of Caussade's intimate friends. Hence the name of the play, "Nos Intimes." Some of them are cousins, others city acquaintances, college chums, and the like. The first to come are Mme. and M. Vigneux, who are poor, envious, and disagreeable. Next comes Marécat, who brings his hobble-de-hoy of a boy, Raphael, without being invited. Marécat objects to his room, and Caussade asks Vigneux to give up the blue room, at which Vigneux takes umbrage. "Is it because he is rich and I am poor that I should give up to him my room?" The next to appear is Abdallah Pasha, a Franco-Moor whom Caussade had known in Algeria. He carries an arsenal of weapons, and embraces Caussade, taking him to his bosom like a brother in arms.

The unfortunate Caussade soon finds that his dear friends are hard to please. They do not like his garden, his horses, his table, or his wines, and they do not scruple to

tell him so. If he shows dissatisfaction, they grow offended, and ask him if he does not appreciate the frankness of friendship. Some of them are discussing him in his garden:

VIGNEUX [*with a sneer*].—Regular country-house isn't it?

MME. VIGNEUX—Yes; and a magnificent park.

VIGNEUX—A flower-garden, a vegetable-garden . . .

MME. VIGNEUX—Yes, and a poultry-yard.

VIGNEUX—Nothing is lacking.

[*Enter THOLOSAN.*]

MME. VIGNEUX—Ah, doctor! M. Vigneux and I are discussing the famous park.

THOLOSAN—A fine property, Caussade's, is it not?

VIGNEUX—Yes; and proud enough he is of it.

MME. VIGNEUX—Yes; and he has often enough urged us to come and visit at *his* house.

THOLOSAN—Yes; he wants his friends to come and share *his* good fortune with him.

MME. VIGNEUX—Well, I don't see why he should all the time be talking about it.

THOLOSAN—In fact, it is a little tiresome for those who are not so fortunate.

VIGNEUX—If it were only tiresome, I should not mind. But it is irritating. Nothing but *my* house, *my* garden, *my* horses. Bah!

MME. VIGNEUX—Well, my dear, you know all purse-proud people are like that.

VIGNEUX—If he were not a friend, now, I would not care; but what cuts me is that he is *my* friend.

THOLOSAN—That your friend should be rich?

VIGNEUX—No; but that he should be so ostentatious with his riches. For it is scarcely in good taste for him to bespatter us with his luxury—we who are not rich.

MME. VIGNEUX—Yes; and his wife, with her gorgeous toilets. Dear me!

VIGNEUX—Yes; it's petty, that's what it is. It's petty. It's taking pleasure in humiliating those who are poorer than he.

THOLOSAN—But is it not well that he has his fortune, even if you have not?—for he has often obliged you, has he not?

VIGNEUX—Oh, yes; but he does it in a kind of a way that I don't like. He doesn't wait to be asked; he always comes and *offers* you his purse—*offers* you his assistance.

THOLOSAN—I see. A good-hearted man would never offer assistance to his friends. You are quite right. I understand you perfectly.

VIGNEUX [*aside to his wife*—I think this doctor is a fool. He doesn't understand what we're talking about.

[*Enter MARÉCAT, another dear friend.*]

THOLOSAN—Good-morning, M. Marécat. How did you sleep?

MARÉCAT—Didn't sleep at all.

MME. VIGNEUX—These country beds are so hard.

VIGNEUX—I'll bet that yours was better than mine.

MARÉCAT—No, indeed. And it wasn't the bed only. I'm getting enough of the country. Animals and insects keep me from eating, from drinking, and from sleeping. When we had lunch yesterday, under the vine arbor, every moment I thought I would find a worm in my glass or a spider on my fork. Ugh! When I walk in the garden, the butterflies bump around my nose. If I sit down, the flies buzz in my ears. When I go to bed, the mosquitoes sing and bite me. Distant dogs bark and keep me awake. When I sink into a troubled sleep toward morning the accursed cocks in the poultry-yard wake me again. To the devil with the country!

CAUSSADE [*entering, vivacious and smiling*—Good-morning, good-morning. How is everybody? Beautiful morning, isn't it? Did you sleep well, Marécat?

MARÉCAT—No. Couldn't sleep. Your poultry-yard chorus and your dogs kept me awake.

CAUSSADE [*laughing gayly*—Too bad, too bad. But isn't it beautiful this morning, Mme. Vigneux? How do you like the country round about?

MME. VIGNEUX—Not bad, but it lacks horizon.

VIGNEUX—I think it's a little damp, isn't it?

CAUSSADE [*somewhat disconcerted*—Damp?

MARÉCAT—Of course it is. Even the bed-clothes are damp.

VIGNEUX—Yes, there's so much stagnant water in the neighbourhood.

CAUSSADE—Stagnant water! Why, I did not know—

VIGNEUX—You will know in a year or so.

MARÉCAT—When you are all twisted with rheumatism.

CAUSSADE—When I am twisted—

MME. VIGNEUX [*sententiously*—There's nothing so dangerous as living in houses near standing water.

MARÉCAT—I wouldn't live here if you paid me to.

MME. VIGNEUX—I think it must be malarial here, too.

MARÉCAT—Malarial! Why, I knew a man who lived near here for a few months some years ago and who caught malarial fever.

CAUSSADE [*disturbed*].—Well?

MARÉCAT—Lived right here, I say. I think it was the next place to yours.

CAUSSADE—Well, what happened to him?

MARÉCAT—What happened to him? Why, he died. That's what happened to him.

CAUSSADE—Is it possible that this country is so deadly?

VIGNEUX—This country! Why, you don't own the whole country, do you?

MARÉCAT—Why, yes, of course he does. He's a great man—Caussade.

MME. VIGNEUX—But he doesn't seem to be at home on his own place.

MARÉCAT—Fact. He looks like his own gardener.

MME. VIGNEUX—Yes, everybody says: "How did he ever come to have such a place?"

VIGNEUX—When more deserving people have none at all.

MARÉCAT—It is not his intelligence.

VIGNEUX—Nor his polish.

MME. VIGNEUX—Nor his wit.

CAUSSADE [*protesting*].—Come, come, my friends; are you not a little hard on me?

ALL [*together*].—See there! He can't stand a single frank and friendly word.

THOLOSAN [*who has watched the scene from one side*].—M. Caussade, it is possible for a man to have so many friends that he has none.

CAUSSADE—Come, come, doctor, you are too severe. All friends are not alike.

THOLOSAN—Indeed they are not. Dear friends are divided into many kinds. There is the Despotic Friend, who makes us execute his commissions; the Witty Friend, who makes jokes about us behind our backs; the Indiscreet Friend, who gives away our little weaknesses and infirmities; the Parasitic Friend, who sponges upon us; the Speculative Friend, who loses our money; and seventeen different kinds of Borrowing Friends, from the one who borrows your books and does not return them, to the one who borrows your wife and *does* return her.

Caussade's dear friends, with the ferocious Abdallah at the head, embroil him in a duel with a neighbour, and refuse to allow him to apologise. Then they inform him that his wife is false to him, and that his friend, Maurice, has betrayed his friendship. Caussade refuses to believe their accusations, and they insist that he shall pretend to leave for Paris, return unexpectedly, and surprise the lovers. He refuses, but they tell his wife that he is going, so he is forced to consent. He does return, arriving just after the critical moment of a passionate scene between his wife, Cécile, and his friend, Maurice. Maurice breaks the bell-cord to prevent her ringing. Cécile is attempting desperately to prevent Maurice from making a declaration of love. Dr. Tholosan's warnings are still sounding in her ears—she fears that an avowal will stretch Maurice lifeless at her feet. Suddenly an idea flashes across her mind, and she tells him some one is looking through the window, which gives upon the balcony. He throws open the window and leaps out on the balcony. She darts to the window, fastens it, and falls breathless into a chair. At that moment she hears the grating of a key in an unused door opening upon the garden. It opens and her husband appears. He says, under his breath: "Thank God! They lied! she is alone."

As is the way on the stage, all the intimate friends at once enter and shake their heads significantly at Caussade. One points to an overturned chair, another to the broken bell-cord, but Dr. Tholosan, who has just entered, explains that the Angel Boy, Raphael, has been smoking a cigar and is violently sick; that he overturned the chair in hurriedly assisting him; that he broke the bell-cord in ringing for help. And when Vigneux points to the open door leading into Maurice's room, Tholosan explains that he opened it to carry in the wretched and retching Raphael, who is lying now on Maurice's bed. Caussade's face gradually brightens as these suspicious circumstances are cleared away, and he

goes to the balcony window to open it for air, which, poor man, he sorely needs. It will not open. Cécile almost faints as she whispers to Tholosan that Maurice is hiding on the balcony. Like a flash the clever doctor at once begins shouting: "Jump, jump!"

"Who jump? What jump?" says Marécat.

"This cork," says the doctor, holding up a medicine-bottle for Raphael. "It won't come out. Jump, jump, you rascal!" and he pries the cork out with a key.

The husband smiles and says: "The jump is made."

"Yes, indeed, it is," says the doctor, significantly, to Cécile, as the husband opens the window on the empty balcony, and the curtain falls.

In the last act the indiscreet wife goes to her rescuer, Dr. Tholosan, and tells him that her husband has remained up all night seated at the window watching the garden; that at daybreak he had suddenly descended to the garden and she had not seen him since. She fears the worst. She is convinced that he has gone forth to slay Maurice. The doctor goes out to learn what he can and re-assures her. The first person he meets is Maurice. Maurice tells him he had leaped twenty feet from the balcony, falling on his side with no injury but a sprain to his right wrist, but in his fall he had struck a magnificent cactus and completely destroyed it. When he came to himself he was about to enter the house, but saw Caussade apparently watching from the balcony, so he had remained hidden in the shrubbery.

Tholosan and Maurice return to the house and there meet Caussade. He greets them with a pre-occupied air. Maurice says that he is suddenly summoned to Paris and must at once make his adieux. Caussade abruptly asks Maurice to write his Paris address for him *in his own hand*. Maurice points at his sprained wrist to Tholosan, who whispers: "You must do it." With the perspiration

starting from his brow, the young man writes the address with his sprained hand, and almost faints with pain. As he bids farewell to Cécile and her husband, Caussade says to him: "Why do you not shake hands?" Maurice mechanically extends his right hand, and Caussade gives it a grip which makes him wince. While Tholosan is supporting Maurice, as he goes out, Caussade rapidly leaves the room. He returns at once, carrying a pistol. He also goes out, following them. A shot is heard. Cécile utters a cry: "My God, I have killed him!" Outside, the voice of Caussade is heard: "Dead! at last." In a moment Caussade enters, in one hand a pistol, in the other a dead fox. He explains that the animal had been preying upon his garden, so he sat up all the previous night watching for him; the beast had ruined a magnificent cactus, but he had just that moment spied him in the garden and killed him.

The intimate friends prepare to leave, disappointed at having made so little mischief. But on rounding them up, Raphael, the Angel Boy, is found to be missing. Marécat, his agitated father, discovers that the young rascal has eloped with Mme. Caussade's chambermaid. Marécat bitterly reproaches Caussade, and launches a formal curse on him and his. "Be thou accursed, Lucien Caussade!" Having cursed Caussade, Marécat goes forth to seek his Angel Boy.

ABDALLAH—*Lucien Caussade!* Do you call yourself *Lucien*?

CAUSSADE—Why, yes.

ABDALLAH—Then you are not *Evariste Caussade*, non-com. in the African army?

CAUSSADE—Not at all.

ABDALLAH [*heatedly*—This is a nice state of affairs. Then what am I doing here, I'd like to know?

CAUSSADE—That's what I'd like to know, too.

ABDALLAH [*excitedly*—I'm not acquainted with you, sir. I don't know you at all.

CAUSSADE—And I've been wondering who the deuce you are.

ABDALLAH—Why, confound it, I have been here for days, eating, drinking, amusing myself, just as if you were a friend of mine. I don't like this sort of thing!

CAUSSADE—Well, how about me?

ABDALLAH [*angrily*—Confound it, sir, I don't wish to be under obligations to a total stranger. You're no friend of mine!

And with the rapid departure of Abdallah the last of Caussade's "dear friends" drop out of the play.

There remains, however, one. But he is a son-in-law rather than a dear friend, for Dr. Tholosan weds Caussade's daughter Benjamine.

FERRÉOL

IN "Ferréol," Sardou made an incursion into the drama of criminal procedure. It was said at the time that his play had been taken from a novel by Jules Sandeau, entitled "Un Début dans la Magistrature." But if so it suffered such a transformation that the plot was unrecognisable.

A dreadful crime has been committed in the vicinity of Aix. Some peasants, on their way to work in the morning, have heard a gun-shot. They hasten to the spot, where they discover the body of a dead man. Another man had been leaning over the body, perhaps to finish his dreadful task; but when he saw the peasants he had fled, before they could overtake or recognise him. They discover that the murdered man is du Bouscal, a rascally usurer. The dead man dealt in shady affairs, and had the reputation of being a low libertine and a person of evil repute.

At the news of the murder, the servants, the peasantry, and all that little world which makes up public opinion in a country town, cry as with one voice, "D'Aigremont is the murderer." This D'Aigremont, it seems, is the son of a well-to-do family, but leads a rather irregular life. He is something of a spendthrift, and what is generally called a ne'er-do-well. He owed money to du Bouscal, and a note for a considerable sum fell due on the day of the murder. He went to request of the usurer that it should be renewed, but du Bouscal refused, and the two men separated with mutual menaces. An hour after the murder, the usurer's pocketbook had been found in a straw heap by one Martial, game-keeper to the Marquis de Boismartel, the President of the Criminal Court of Aix. In the pocketbook are found some bank-notes and several private papers belonging to the dead man, but D'Aigremont's promissory note has disap-

peared. This last fact clearly establishes a circumstantial case against D'Aigremont. He is arrested and taken before the Criminal Court of Aix, presided over by de Boismartel.

At an evening reception in the upper circles of Aix, the old city is in a flurry. Everybody takes sides for or against the accused man. General astonishment is expressed that so weak a youth should be guilty of so great a crime. Although D'Aigremont's life had been dissipated, he had never shown any signs of being a criminal. Pity is expressed for his young sister Thérèse, who is engaged to marry Lieut. Ferréol, of the Army of Africa.

In the midst of all this agitation preliminary to the criminal trial, Ferréol apparently arrives from Africa, on a fortnight's furlough. He has learned from the newspapers of the dreadful accusation which hangs over his future brother-in-law, and he has hastened to defend D'Aigremont, and to save him if he can.

But Ferréol, in a rendezvous with Madame de Boismartel, the wife of the President of the Court, discloses to us that he has not just arrived from Africa, but has for some days been hiding near Aix.

This interview also reveals to us the secret of the murder. D'Aigremont is innocent. The usurer, du Bouscal, was slain by a shot from the gun of the game-keeper, Martial, whose wife the usurer had debauched. Ferréol at this early morning hour was leaving the chamber of Madame de Boismartel; thus he was an involuntary witness of the murder, at the moment he was about to leap the ditch which separates the estate of the Marquis de Boismartel from the highway.

Let us hasten to say that the nocturnal interview of Madame de Boismartel with Ferréol, however culpable had been its first intention, had terminated in the triumph of honour and virtue. At the moment of receiving in her chamber the friend of her childhood, whose wife she once had

hoped to be, Madame de Boismartel was suddenly stricken with remorse. Her little daughter's sudden illness had come to her as a warning from heaven, and Ferréol had found in her not a mistress, but a faithful wife and a devoted mother. He withdrew, swearing that he would never attempt to see her again.

But he must break his promise—it is to reveal to her the secret which is weighing upon his conscience. Shall he allow the unfortunate D'Aigremont to go to his death? Yet if Ferréol shall speak, how can he explain his presence at the scene of the murder, at a time when everyone believed him to be on his way from Africa? Despite the dreadful peril that menaces her reputation, Madame de Boismartel understands that Ferréol must speak, and must save an innocent man from a condemnation, all the more infamous that the murder seems to be coupled with robbery.

For a time she has a respite—rumours from the court soon reach her. She hears that the eloquent argument of Lauriot, the celebrated Paris lawyer who defends D'Aigremont, has so influenced the jurors that it is believed they will acquit him. Why, then, should Ferréol speak? Why should he expose her to danger? If she is compromised, her justly offended husband could demand a separation, and perhaps deprive her of her child. To this dreadful feeling Madame de Boismartel feels herself giving way. She begs Ferréol to be silent. But in the midst of their hesitation and mental anguish, the solemn hour comes. The jury has found D'Aigremont guilty. He is condemned to the galleys for life.

It is as if a thunderbolt had fallen on Ferréol. He does not wish to ruin the woman whom he has loved, but he cannot suffer an innocent man to undergo a penalty more cruel than death. He addresses himself, therefore, to the real murderer. He promises to secure him a pardon, on condition that the man shall leave the country, first writing the

Magistrate a letter in which he shall avow his crime. But Martial refuses. He loves the wife who has been unfaithful to him—he will not accept an exile which would take him from her side. Moreover, he has seen Ferréol escaping from Madame de Boismartel's window. If they denounce him, he will denounce them—he will cover them all with shame.

Ferréol, wild with desperation and remorse, takes the frenzied resolution of giving himself up to the Magistrate as the murderer. His declaration is received by the Magistrate, de Boismartel, with incredulity. Still, his assistant, Lavardin, reminds him of the old maxim: "Search for the woman." This they do, and it is under the direction of the unsuspecting husband that this search is undertaken. At last the officers of justice are on the right path. From the self-accused Ferréol they come to Martial; from Martial they are led directly to suspect Madame de Boismartel.

The unfortunate Marquis is at once Magistrate and husband. His heart is breaking, but he bids his assistant interrogate Madame de Boismartel. The stricken woman avows everything, and the truth is disclosed. But while she is making her confession, news comes that the true murderer, Martial, who is in prison, awaiting his examination, has hanged himself. There is no further reason to pursue him. The dreadful task of the Magistrate is finished. The husband opens his arms to his wife, and Lieut. Ferréol weds Mademoiselle Thérèse D'Aigremont, whose brother is set free.

SPIRITISME

THE story begins with an exploit of Mme. Simone d'Aubenas, a young matron of thirty. She is by no means vicious, and does not detest her very worthy husband, but she is bored with her quiet life. So, to pass the time, she falls in love with a handsome Wallachian, Michael de Stoudza. This very evening she is about to take the train for her château in Poitou, where her husband is to join her in a few days. She ostensibly goes to the railway station, accompanied by her confidential friend, Thécla. On the way, however, she leaves Thécla to go to the station alone, while Simone herself repairs to a rendezvous where she is awaited by her handsome Wallachian.

But a dreadful and unforeseen event occurs. The train which Mme. Simone was to take has collided with a heavy tank-train loaded with petroleum. The people on the passenger train have all been burned to death in the wreck. The little bag in which Mme. Simone carried her jewels has been found on the skeleton of a woman. This causes M. d'Aubenas to believe that the calcined body is that of his wife. Maddened with grief, he bears back to his home these dreadful remains.

The next morning Simone, who is with her handsome Wallachian, learns these things. With what successive stages of surprise, of terror, of despair they gradually possess her, one may easily imagine. After she has weakly wrung her hands for a time, she asks herself what she shall do. If she reveals herself to her husband, it would be a frank avowal of her sin. There is a simple solution of the difficulty—since she is believed to be dead, she will profit by

it. She will go away with her handsome Michael to his picturesque Wallachian fatherland, where they will spend their lives together in blissful idleness, the world forgetting, by the world forgot.

But the handsome Michael does not grow enthusiastic over the solution. If Simone is dead in the eyes of the world, that means that Simone, being dead, possesses nothing. She can take nothing with her to the other world, or rather to the picturesque Wallachian fatherland. What the gentleman prefers to Simone presumably dead and in reality poor, is Simone certainly divorced and in reality rich. Beneath the handsome exterior of her lover, Mme. Simone discovers his ignominious soul, and she spits her contempt into his face.

There remains but one course for her to follow. It is to avow all to her husband. But just at this moment there comes through the open window from without the sound of the monotonous voices of priests mumbling the prayers for the dead. Looking forth from the window, Simone sees, walking behind the bier, in which he believes her body lies, her husband, pale, broken, shaking with sobs. The stage scene is a strong one. The audience breathlessly waits, hoping that she will cry out to her husband, and that his joy at finding her will cause him to pardon her. But Simone does not reveal herself yet. She leaves him for some days in the most profound dejection, haunted with all sorts of shadows from the other world. For M. d'Aubenas is a believer in Spiritualism.

Simone takes into her confidence a cousin as counsellor, who arranges a materialising séance. In the vast hall, empty, dark, but finally flooded by the light of the rising moon, Simone appears to her husband, who takes her for a spirit. Their meeting is an affecting one. She confesses

and of entertaining impious and immoral doctrines. His scheme is not only to wed Gismonda, but to make away with the lawful heir. These schemes he cautiously suggests to the ex-bravo Gregoras, his trusted confidant, who is now acting as Chamberlain to the Duchess.

An Asiatic Prince has sent a gift to Gismonda, a tiger, which for the nonce is confined in the bottom of a cistern. The cunning Gregoras leads the boy Francesco to look at the fierce beast, and apparently by accident, lets the child fall into the pit. Gismonda cries in her agony to the four noblemen, "I swear before God that my person and my Duchy shall go to the man who saves my son." The boy is saved, not by one of the four noblemen, but by the falconer Almerio, illegitimate son of a Venetian noble and an Athenian maid-servant. When the Duchess made her vow she had no thought of this poor falconer, who happens to be a tall handsome fellow. She wavers—she does not wish to keep her vow. "I will cover you with wealth and heap riches upon you," she tells him. But he replies: "The only recompense I ask is that which you have promised me." And the Bishop Sophron says gravely, "Your Highness, you must keep the oath you have sworn."

In the next act we find Gismonda in a convent, whither she has gone to withdraw for a time from the world. She has besought the Pope to release her from her vow, but Bishop Sophron brings her the refusal of the Holy Father. The Pontiff sees no way for her to extricate herself from her dilemma, unless she turns nun, in which event the Holy Father will kindly charge himself with the regency of her little Duchy. Gismonda does not seem pleased with his decision. She points out the case of Queen Johanna of Naples, who, having killed her husband and wedded her lover, was absolved by the Pope, who thus acquired Avignon at a low price. She is absolutely lacking in respect for

the head of the Christian world, but she finishes by submitting, through fear of excommunication.

The Duchess has promised the District of Sula to the man who shall rid it of the Catalan pirates installed at Marathon. Almerio quickly assembles a band of daredevil companions, and brings back the head of the Pirate Chief slung to his saddle-bow. The Athenian people love him for his heroism, and because he is born of a daughter of their people; they surround the convent where Gismonda has taken refuge, shouting for Almerio and giving signs of revolt. Almerio succeeds in pacifying them, but makes his way to Gismonda, and again demands his recompense. The four noblemen and the traitor Zaccaria accuse him of rebellion, and demand his death. The Duchess listens; her pride is as yet unconquered, but she cannot forget that this handsome plebeian has saved her son's life and delivered her land from foreign pirates. Although base-born, he is nobler in her eyes than the noblemen who so bitterly strive to compass his destruction. Therefore, wishing to save his life, she has him placed in the semblance of a prison.

In the third act, Gismonda is troubled by the thought of her prisoner. She sends for him, and has speech with him alone. She says to him that she is grateful for what he has done; she will add to the province of Sula, which she has already given him, other lands and other castles; further, she will give him in marriage the richest and fairest of her maids of honour; all this on condition that he release her from her vow. But Almerio firmly refuses. Then she turns upon him, reproaching him bitterly for his greed. She tells him that to have so rapacious a soul he must be half Venetian and half Greek—that what he craves is all her Duchy and all her riches.

"You are mistaken," replies Almerio. "What I desire

and what I will have is yourself, Duchess. I care nothing for your Duchy."

This comes upon the Duchess as a revelation. Then it would seem that this half-savage warrior really loves her for herself.

"If I should become your mistress would you release me?"

"Yes."

"Swear it."

"I swear it."

"Swear that, if I yield myself to you, you will never betray me."

"I swear."

"Swear also that you will publicly release me from my vow."

Almerio hesitates, but at last he mutters: "I swear."

Then she turns upon him with bitter scorn, crying: "You are a lackey, a stable boy, a slave! Go back to your hut—but—*leave your door open to-night.*"

That night Gismonda, accompanied by her trusted maid, is leaving the cabin of Almerio, which is near the ruins of a Temple of Venus. The women see two cloaked forms in the darkness, and hurriedly conceal themselves behind a tree. The two strangers pause and converse in low tones. It is Zaccaria and Gregoras. Zaccaria, after spying through the window of Almerio's hut, says to the ruffian:

"He is asleep. Enter, and drive your dagger into his heart."

But the bravo hesitates.

"Why so many airs?" sneers Zaccaria. "You did not hesitate at dropping the boy Francesco into the tiger's den."

Gismonda, from her hiding-place behind the tree, has heard this avowal. She rapidly reaches the door of the hut at the moment that Zaccaria is about to enter, and with an axe which stands there, she cleaves his skull.

In the next scene, which takes place in a Byzantine Church, there is an episcopal procession, with prelates and priests wearing the gorgeous vestments of the Greek clergy. After the celebration of the mass, Almerio presents himself, and declares publicly that he releases the Duchess from her vow. But a messenger enters, who announces to Gismonda that they have discovered, near the Temple of Venus, the dead body of Zaccaria.

Here Gregoras enters, crying, "Almerio is the murderer."

Almerio replies briefly, "It is true."

Gismonda takes him aside, saying: "Do you not know that they will put you to the torture?"

"I know it," replies the generous youth, "but I have sworn that no one shall ever know what you have done for me. Since I saved you, and since my night of happiness with you, I die content."

Gismonda suddenly orders her archers to seize and bind Gregoras.

"This wretch," cries she, "assisted by Zaccaria, let fall my son into the tiger's den, and Zaccaria would have murdered Almerio in his sleep had not I, with my own hand, cloven the traitor's skull. I was leaving Almerio's hut, whither I had gone to be his mistress, as a bribe to force him to release me from my vow. I confess it thus publicly, for my punishment." And kneeling before Almerio she says, "I loved you secretly, now I love you before God and man. I will keep my vow and wed you. Good Archbishop, if it pleases you, bless our nuptials." And in the midst of the brilliantly lighted church, with the gorgeously vested ecclesiastics surrounding them, the Duchess and the Falconer are made man and wife.

LES GENS NERVEUX

THE play begins with the appearance of Tiburce, a post-office employee, who has come to seek the hand of Marion, the adopted daughter of Marteau, a neurasthenic capitalist. Living in the same house are Bergerin, also a rich neurasthenic bachelor, and Tuffier, another wealthy neurasthenic, with a nervous son. When the astonished Tiburce learns into what sort of a place he has fallen, he remarks:

"Well, this is a nice place. Bergerin a neurasthenic, old man Tuffier a neurasthenic, young Tuffier a neurasthenic, and old man Marteau a neurasthenic. Why, the very house must have epilepsy."

Louis here enters in a rage at the servants, for not answering his bell. He begins pounding on the table and yelling at the top of his voice for the servants until Tiburce, frightened, escapes.

This new neurasthenic is in love with Marion, whose hand Tiburce has come to seek. Louis loves the lady madly, but his irritable nerves so upset her that in the opening of the play they have a violent quarrel, and she vows never to see him again. At the crisis of this quarrel M. Tuffier comes in, and the nervous father remarks to the nervous son:

"What, you again? I thought I told you to keep out of my sight. You know you are so nervous you always put me in a nervous state, and to-day the weather is changing so that my nerves are all on edge."

Here Mme. Tuffier enters; she is a French Mrs. Toodles, and she rambles on until she drives her nervous husband half mad:

LOUIS—Come, come, father, the weather will not upset you. Don't be so fearful.

TUFFIER—Me, fearful! Why, you rascal, I'm not fearful. I was in the militia for eighteen months, and I was never afraid. Why, I was in camp at St. Germain.

MME. TUFFIER [*who holds her fancy-work in her hand, and never hears anything but the last word of a sentence*—So you are talking of St. Germain.

TUFFIER—Well!

MME. TUFFIER—So you still intend to go and visit the Lacombe family at St. Germain.

TUFFIER—Mme. Tuffier, I have told you a hundred times that you have a mania for getting things mixed.

MME. TUFFIER—Mania! I knew perfectly well that you would insist on this mania of yours for going to St. Germain, and I consider it absolutely ridiculous, because—

TUFFIER—Good heavens! Now she's wound up.

MME. TUFFIER—Because you know perfectly well the Lacombes do not expect us until late in the summer. Do they, Louis?

TUFFIER—O Lord! [*Groans dismally.*]

MME. TUFFIER—Besides, you know perfectly well the Lacombes are not rich—not that I condemn them for that—poverty is no crime. But they are not rolling in wealth, and it would upset them a great deal if we were to drop in on them without warning.

TUFFIER—Mme. Tuffier, will you let me speak?

MME. TUFFIER—Besides, it is three miles from the station to the Lacombes' house, and you know perfectly well in your condition of health you have no business to make that drive.

TUFFIER and LOUIS [*shouting together*—Dry up! Dry up! "Stop! for heaven's sake, stop!" he cries, as he falls into a chair and shakes his fist at his wife. As Bergerin enters, he explains: "It's Mme. Tuffier. She will kill me, Bergerin," and as Mme. Tuffier again begins to talk, he shrieks: "Take her away! Take her away!"

Louis unfastens his father's cravat, and says: "Come and help me to restore him, M. Bergerin."

But Bergerin turns his back, and hastily replies: "Oh, no, indeed, Louis, I could not stand it. I break down even at seeing an animal suffer. I would not look at Tuffier suffering for anything in the world. Why, the mere thought of it almost gives me a ner-

vous attack. I must sit down." He carefully turns his back on Tuffier, sits down, and goes on: "Oh, my dear young man, I'm nothing but a bundle of nerves. The least emotion, the least opposition, the least contrariety, upsets me, even a change in the weather. Why, take to-day. A harsh, cold wind is beginning to blow from the north."

Tuffier here suddenly recovers and interrupts: "It isn't! It's a moist wind, and it's blowing from the south."

But Bergerin waves Tuffier aside and ignores him. He goes on: "Ah, if you knew what a strict *régime* I am forced to follow! I am obliged to lead a calm and measured life. I must take pleasant walks, I am forced to confine myself to the best of cooking, I must go to the theatre often, and only to see pleasant spectacles. I am obliged to have a most comfortable chamber, with rich hangings and thick carpets, I must avoid all painful impressions, I must not gaze upon suffering and misery. For this reason, I am condemned to a life of celibacy. I am deprived of the society of lovely woman. Love, love quarrels, jealousy—all these things would agitate my unfortunate nerves. If it is difficult to get along with a wife, think of children. A child cries at night. It suffers while teething. I would have to get up at night and go for the doctor. Do you think I could see my infant suffer? No, no, poor little one! I would be obliged to leave my wife with the baby, and go to the country."

Here the chief neurasthenic enters. It is Marteau. He has his hands behind his back, his head inclined upon his breast with a most lugubrious air. Every one receives him in silence. He shakes Tuffier's hand without looking at him, and passes on in silence. He salutes Bergerin in the same silent way. He reaches Tiburce, whom he does not know, but Marteau takes his hand without looking at him, begins shaking it, stops, looks at him in astonishment, drops his hand, and walks away:

BERGERIN—Feeling bad to-day?

MARTEAU—Yes.

BERGERIN—Nerves?

MARTEAU—Yes.

TUFFIER—Change in the wind?

MARTEAU—Yes.

BERGERIN—That's what I said. North wind.

TUFFIER—No, south wind.

MARTEAU—Yes.

BERGERIN—Have you tried those electric belts?

[MARTEAU unfolds a newspaper and hands it to TUFFIER.]

TUFFIER—Shall I read it?

[MARTEAU points out the place, nods his head, and sinks back in his chair.]

TUFFIER [reading]—"Ten thousand francs reward to any person who can cure a chronic nervous affection. Address No. 35 Church Street. Monsieur M.—" M. Is that you, Marteau?

[MARTEAU nods his head.]

TUFFIER—Did any one answer it?

[MARTEAU holds up ten fingers.]

BERGERIN—Quacks?

[MARTEAU nods his head.]

TUFFIER—Where are they?

[MARTEAU makes a kick.]

TUFFIER—Fired out?

[MARTEAU nods his head.]

Tiburce here interrupts with some suggestion concerning the quacks, which leads Marteau to ask who he is. Bergerin presents him, and announces that he is employed in the post-office, at a salary of twelve hundred francs, that he has ten thousand francs of his own, and that he has come to solicit the hand of Marteau's adopted daughter, Marion:

MARTEAU [exploding]—How is this for luck? My dinner went wrong; the roast was raw; the chicken was burned; the coffee was cold, and my stomach is out of order to-night. This is all that is necessary to upset it completely. [He walks feverishly up and down.] How can I know the good qualities or defects of this gentleman, because the temperament of a son-in-law is a vital point. [Addressing BERGERIN.] Is his temperament nervous?

TIBURCE—No, sir. No.

MARTEAU [Still walking up and down and not noticing TIBURCE]—Sanguine?

TIBURCE—No.

MARTEAU—Bilious?

TIBURCE—No.

MARTEAU—Bilioso-sanguine?

TIBURCE—No.

MARTEAU—Nervoso-sanguine?

TIBURCE—No.

MARTEAU—Nervoso-bilioso-sanguine?

TIBURCE—No, no!

MARTEAU [*stopping in front of BERGERIN*].—Then he has absolutely no temperament at all. If no temperament, then no character.

TIBURCE [*in a weak tone*].—Is it absolutely necessary that I must have some temperament? Well, then, I think I am inclined to be sanguine.

MARTEAU—Sanguine? Ah, predisposed to congestion, to apoplexy. He would be dangerous to his wife, his children, to his father-in-law. Black-balled!

TIBURCE—No, I didn't mean sanguine. Bilious is what I meant—bilious.

MARTEAU—Bilious? Then this means predisposition to melancholia; to gloom, to madness—dangerous to his wife, to his children, to his father-in-law. Black-balled!

TIBURCE—Excuse me, but I remember now that I am not bilious, I think I am nervous.

MARTEAU, BERGERIN, and TUFFIER [*all shouting together*].—Nervous!

TIBURCE—That is, a little nervous.

MARTEAU—Then that would settle you. A nervous son-in-law would be all that is lacking to drive me crazy. But if, on the other hand, you are of a cheerful temperament, always thoughtful, easy to get along with, I would consider your claims. But if you always choose such disagreeable subjects of conversation; if you can not laugh without laughing too loudly, nor blow your nose without making a noise; if you can not agree to remain absolutely motionless, and above all, if you continue to use that smelly pomade on your hair, and to wear such loud waistcoats and shrieking neckties, you are unanimously black-balled.

TIBURCE—But—

MARTEAU—Don't interrupt me. I have sworn that my two daughters shall marry no matter whom, so that he be not nervous. Do you understand?

TIBURCE—Ah, sir, I am exactly your man, then. There is not the slightest trace of nervousness about me.

MARTEAU—That's an easy thing to say, we'll see about that. [*He comes behind TIBURCE, and while TIBURCE is not observing he hits him a tremendous blow on the shoulder, suddenly seizes his wrist, takes out his watch, and begins to count his pulse.*]

TIBURCE [*surprised*].—Ouch! You nearly dislocated my shoulder.

MARTEAU [*calmly counting*].—That's nothing. His pulse is even, steady, very good; let's try another test. [*Going to the sofa.*] Come here, young man [*making the motion of scratching the horse-hair sofa*], let's see if you can do this with your nails.

TIBURCE—That's easy. [*He scratches the horse-hair violently with his nails.*]

BERGERIN, TUFFIER, and MARTEAU [*all three put their fingers in their ears*].—Enough, enough, for heaven's sake stop!

TIBURCE—Is that all?

MARTEAU—Not yet. [*He gives him a cork and a knife.*] Now, let's see you cut this cork. [*TIBURCE cuts the cork, which squeaks loudly.*]

TUFFIER, BERGERIN, and MARTEAU [*grind their teeth and shout together*].—Enough, enough, stop! [*TUFFIER snatches the knife and cork from TIBURCE's hands.*]

MARTEAU [*solemnly, to TIBURCE*].—Young man, you have passed all the tests—you are not nervous. You feel nothing. You are simply a machine. You have no nerves. I permit you to make application for the hand of Marion.

LOUIS [*entering suddenly*].—What, Marion?

MARTEAU [*firmly*].—Yes, Marion.

LOUIS—I forbid him to marry Marion.

MARTEAU—Leave, monsieur.

LOUIS [*screaming*].—If he marries her I will kill him.

TIBURCE—Kill me?

LOUIS [*tearing his hair*].—Yes, and I shall set fire to the house.

[*TIBURCE, TUFFIER, BERGERIN, and MARTEAU all rush to the window and shout "Fire! Fire!"*]

At this moment Cæsar, Marteau's nephew, enters and demands to know where the fire is, but the entire gathering informs him it is "nothing but nerves." Marteau suddenly bethinks himself, and says to Cæsar: "Why, you rascal, did I not drive you from here with my malediction?" To

which Cæsar replies: "Yes, uncle, but I brought it back. I couldn't borrow a thing on it." "What, then," asks Marteau, "brings you under my roof?" "I have come for ten thousand francs," replies Cæsar, taking out a newspaper, and beginning to read: "*Ten thousand francs reward to the person who can cure a chronic, inveterate, nervous affection.*" The exasperated Marteau takes a cane to chastise his nephew, and the ne'er-do-well escapes just in time.

We next find Lucie playing scales on the piano. Marion is setting the clock. Marteau is seated in a reclining-chair, wrapped from head to foot in electro-medical chains. The clock is striking nine o'clock, half-past nine, ten o'clock, half-past ten, and so on. The maid, Placide, is dusting the outer room. Marteau suddenly explodes, and shouts:

"For God's sake, Marion!"

"What is it, papa?" replies Marion, continuing to turn the hands.

Marteau suddenly changes to the utmost mildness. "No," he mutters, "I must not fly into a rage with the electro-magnetic chains on me. With these powerful currents, you never can tell with electricity what may happen." Then, addressing Marion in honeyed tones: "Do you think you'll soon be finished, my dearest child?"

"But, papa," replies Marion, "I must make it strike on the hour."

"Don't you think you could skip a few?" asks Marteau.

"What an idea, papa! Why, it would strike all wrong. I'll soon be finished, I'm nearly at half-past eleven—and it's half-past twelve now."

"I verily believe," mutters Marteau, "that those machines were invented to drive people crazy. Whenever I try to wind them the hand is always on one of the key-holes. I never knew it to fail." As the clock strikes twelve, Marteau bawls: "Jumping Jehosephat, they'll drive me crazy! Lucie!"

"Yes, papa," says Lucie, without stopping her scales.

"I mustn't get angry," says Marteau, and mildly asks: "Lucie, my child, is it absolutely necessary for you to do that?"

"Why, yes, papa," replies Lucie, "I must practice my music."

He rings the bell, and the maid answers.

"If my nephew, Cæsar," he roars, "dares to present himself here, shut the door in his face. Do you hear?"

"Yes, but I won't though," replies the maid.

"What, you impudent thing—you won't?" roars the master. "It's lucky for you that I have on these electric chains, and that I don't dare to fly into a passion. I discharge you."

"Discharge, indeed!" replies the maid. "The same as yesterday and the day before, I suppose?"

"No!" shouts the furious Marteau, "for good this time."

And he begins tearing his chains from him and hurling them in pieces at Placide. Marion and Lucie push her out of the door, and urge him to be calm. He grows calmer, and bids them go to the piano and do their scales. They place themselves at the piano and begin to play four-handed scales. Marteau writhes. "To think," says he, "that I should be in these chains since seven o'clock this morning with this result." The four-handed scales continue more loudly than ever. Marteau grinds his teeth. A violent pounding is heard on the ceiling. It develops that the other neurasthenics on the floor above object to the music. They are testifying their displeasure by pounding on the floor, Bergerin with the tongs, and Tuffier with a cane.

There follows an interview between the three rich neurasthenics and Tiburce, the suitor for the hand of Marion. Marteau tells him that some fifteen years before, an old friend had died leaving forty thousand francs to him (Marteau), twelve thousand francs to Bergerin, and thirteen thousand francs to Tuffier. They had just left the lawyer's office after settling up this succession, when, turning the corner of a street, they saw an infant lying on the sidewalk wrapped in a rug. It was evidently a foundling. No one knew anything about it. The pitiful plight of the little one so moved Marteau that he proposed to the others that he should adopt it, and that all three of them should

contribute toward the little girl's *dot*; that they should purchase a coffer, in which all three should put, year in and year out, what they had to spare. Marteau shows to Tiburce this coffer, and tells him that the *dot* of Marion is within. Tiburce desires that it be opened, but Cæsar suddenly enters, and demands to know whether Tiburce wishes to wed the young lady or the *dot*. Tiburce is somewhat embarrassed, and is finally given two hours to decide whether he will marry the lady without opening the coffer. Each one of the three fathers has a key to the coffer. In the meantime, Louis, the neurasthenic son of Tuffier, appears, and first threatens to drown himself, when he hears that Marion is to marry Tiburce, and when he encounters that gentleman, changes his mind and determines to kill him. At the end of the second act, Tiburce is fleeing, with Louis in hot pursuit.

The three fathers and Tiburce and Louis are assembled, Louis's appearance causing some little alarm to Tiburce. The coffer is about to be opened, and Tiburce announces that he is willing to sign the marriage contract before the opening. Both Bergerin and Tuffier show great reluctance to give up their keys. They make all sorts of demands, until finally Marteau, in disgust, orders the notary to draw up the contract, giving the coffer to the newly married couple locked. But such is the wrangling involved by the proposition that Tiburce finally renounces the lady. Marteau then gives her to Louis, with the contents of the coffer, which he, finally securing the keys, opens. All look in. It contains nothing. All three of the adoptive fathers have failed to put anything into the savings-bank. But Marteau had foreseen this end. He takes out a pocketbook containing fifty thousand francs, which, in expectation of the empty coffer, he had brought with him, and he gives this to Marion for her dower when she weds Louis.

MAISON NEUVE¹

IN the title "Maison Neuve" there is a play upon words. *Maison*—in French, as in English—means not only "house" or "building," but mercantile "house" or "firm" as well. The play is concerned with the fortunes of the firm of Genevoix & Pillerat, which for many years has done business at the sign of "The Old Cockade" in the Old House. But the younger members of the firm sigh for more modern quarters, in a new street, in a new establishment, and under a new name—in short, a New House. Hence "Maison Neuve."

In the opening of the play, we are in the old home of the firm. It is the typical establishment of a lesser wholesale dealer in Paris. The firm handles ribbons, laces, veilings, and similar feminine fripperies *en gros*, or wholesale. On the ground floor and in the basement are the salesrooms. On the floor above, live the family.

Uncle Genevoix, an old bachelor, is the head of the firm; René Pillerat, his nephew, is his partner; and Claire, René's wife, acts as bookkeeper. Gabrielle, a younger sister of René, has just returned from boarding-school, where she has "finished her education." It happens also to be the birthday of Claire, likewise the tenth anniversary of her marriage with René. She has no children.

A lady has come to "The Old Cockade" to match some silk, which she could not find at the retailer's. She sees Claire, and is delighted at the meeting. They are school-girl friends. The newcomer, Théodosie, has not seen Claire since eleven years before, when they were at school. Since that time she has married the Baron de Laverdec, by whom she had one child; the Baron died, leaving a very small

¹ Best-known English versions, "Vanity," "Mayfair."

fortune for his daughter, of whom Théodosie was made the guardian. But if she remarries, she loses all share in income and principal. Hence, as she discontentedly explains, there is no chance for her to marry again, so she spends her time as well as she can on her modest income, amusing herself by "taking a flyer on the stock market when she can get a tip from some financier." Having told her story, she asks Claire to give some account of herself.

Claire replies that her story is soon told. "I am here in the Rue Thevenot in the morning, in the Rue Thevenot in the evening—that is my life. Is it not melancholy? My father was in trade, and I was intended for a tradesman's wife. But I was sent to a grand boarding-school in the Champs-Élysées, where my school-fellows were the daughters of noblemen and bankers. I was taught to dance, to sing, to paint, to play the piano. In short, I was given what is called a brilliant education. But one day our old friend, M. Genevoix, came to me in tears. My poor father had been stricken by apoplexy. His death left his affairs much involved. While his assets were large, his liabilities were larger, and the first use to which I was forced to put my brilliant education was the keeping of accounts, something they had not taught me at boarding-school. I found that my life was not to consist of watercolor painting, riding on horseback, and playing the piano, but of adding up columns of figures. When everything was settled, there remained out of the wreck only 40,000 francs for my dot. With terror, I found myself doomed to be an old maid, or perhaps married to some petty shopkeeper. When René Pillerat appeared as a suitor, he pleased me; besides, it meant that I would not be condemned to a horrible little shop. To marry him meant to be the wife of a wholesale dealer, in an old and solid establishment, with comfort at once, and with wealth some day, perhaps. So I said yes—without enthusiasm, but without regret."

The complaints of Claire to her sympathetic friend mirror the life of a French woman of the *Petite Bourgeoisie*, or upper shopkeeper class. Théodosie asks her how she passes her time.

"My time?" replies Claire, bitterly. "It passes rapidly enough. I am at my desk at eight o'clock. My hours are crowded with writing business letters, making out statements of account, entries, and bills of lading. My busiest time is in the morning. We take our midday dinner when and how we can. These office duties occupy me until three o'clock, when the cashier relieves me. I can go out then, but where can I go? In winter it is almost dark at four. In summer, the pleasant part of Paris is too far away. So I go up to my bedroom, where I read novels. When supper time comes, my husband and my uncle discuss exchange on London or the crisis in cotton. In summer I go after supper to my garden, which is twelve feet square, surrounded by high walls. In winter, I sit by the fireside and read the papers, while my husband and uncle play dominoes. At ten o'clock I go to bed, and the next day it is the same routine all over again. Such, my dear, has been my life for ten years, with absolutely no incidents except an occasional cold in the head, the yearly stock-taking, and perhaps the chimney catching fire."

"And you—a true Parisian—graceful, pretty, chic, to lead such a life!" cries the sympathetic Théodosie. "And do you never sigh for anything better than this?"

"Indeed, indeed, I do," replies Claire. "Although we are in Paris, it seems as if I were buried in the country. Everything here is old and faded. My uncle is good, but he is an antique. Our old servant is good, but she wearies me. The furniture is good, but it is old-fashioned. Yet only a hundred yards away is the new Paris—the brilliant, throbbing, feverish, dazzling Paris of the great boulevard. Whiffs of its incense are borne to me by the winds. There

is the new Paris, here is the old. All around us buildings are being demolished and other merchants going to newer quarters. All save us. Here we remain."

Théodosie suggests that they should go into the new quarter and open a brilliant establishment there. But Claire shakes her head. She says that her uncle would not listen to any such suggestion; the affairs of the firm are prospering, and he would not leave a certain present for an uncertain future. "Our partnership articles expire to-day," she says, "and they will be renewed. For our part, we, my husband and I, have made not less than 500,000 francs, net."

While they are speaking, a note is brought from another shopkeeper's wife, who has left the old quarter and opened an establishment on the boulevard. She sends her *valet de chambre*—in her carriage with her monogram on the panel—to match some goods. Claire is secretly much incensed at this display by her former neighbour.

Uncle Genevoix appears. He is a typical French bourgeois—kind-hearted, not very refined, devoted to his business and to his family. He is delighted at the return of his niece Gabrielle. He brings in some of the trusted employees of the Old House, who had known her when she was a little child playing around the court-yard. Among them is André, who, although young, is a trusted clerk. Gabrielle looks at him with interested eyes. Another is old Gudin, the veteran cashier. Her uncle tells her that in the crisis of 1848 the firm was on the point of going under, but old Gudin brought the savings of thirty years and put them in her father's hands, thus rescuing the firm. Her uncle shows her the big easy-chair where her father used to doze every evening; the very desk in which her grandfather locked up the first money he made in his little fancy-goods shop. Genevoix tells her that they are rich enough to replace all these things, but that he loves them, and he hopes she will love them too. They go out

into the dining-room to see the table spread for the family feast.

René returns. He tells Claire that he has a present for her, and she asks to see it. Looking around cautiously, René says: "This is your present—an entirely new establishment: basement, ground floor, and entresol for the sales-rooms and storerooms; the first floor for your living-rooms; a new building on the new Boulevard Malesherbes; a lease for a term of years; everything complete; your apartments fully furnished; your salon hung in blue silk and your boudoir in rose pink."

Claire is overcome with joy. "To think that I should have both a boudoir and a salon!" she cries. "Let us go and see the place at once."

But René restrains her. Uncle Genevoix would be much hurt at the mere thought of their failing to renew their articles of partnership with him and quitting the Old House for a new one. But if Uncle Genevoix is carefully managed, René thinks he might accompany them to the New House, sign new articles, and lease the Old House for what they could get.

As they are discussing this subject, Uncle Genevoix enters. With much trepidation the young couple suggest moving to new and modern quarters on the boulevard. He listens to them—at first with surprise, and then with ill-concealed vexation. He endeavours to dissuade them from any such move. He tells them that their modest fortune will be swallowed up by the enormous expenses of the new buildings on the boulevard; that if they remain where they are in the Old House for five years more, he will then have one hundred thousand francs income. They too will have a handsome income, and they may all retire; he will then purchase a fine place in the country, and all his fortune will be divided between them after his death. As Uncle Genevoix is earnestly begging them not to abandon the Old House,

he is called by Gabrielle to the dining-room, and leaves them for a moment.

Such is the profound chagrin of the old man over the mere contemplation of their new step that René and Claire are afraid to break to him the truth—that they have already taken that step and leased the New House. So they leave a note, telling him in writing what they dared not tell him face to face, and ignominiously flee. The note is presented to Uncle Genevoix just as he is about to sit down to the family feast to which he had looked forward with so much anticipation. Old Genevoix is heart-broken. René and Claire are gone. There remain of the family only himself and Gabrielle.

In the second act, we are in the New House of René and Claire. Everything is very elegant, but very new. There is a new *valet de chambre*, who calls himself a *maître d'hôtel*; there is also a new *femme de chambre*. They exchange confidences concerning their new master and mistress. The *valet* tells the maid of the magnificent banquet with which the New House was inaugurated some weeks before; of the paid puffs concerning it in the boulevard journals. When asked as to the occupants of the house, he replies:

"We are a little mixed. In the basement, on the ground floor and the entresol, we have our store-rooms. Here, on the first floor we have seven windows looking on the boulevard with a balcony. This is our apartment. The seven adjoining windows belong to our neighbour, M. de Marsille, a very lively club-man. On the second floor, we have Mlle. Mandarine, a very lively lady with orange-coloured hair. On the third floor is the Baroness de Laverdec, a friend of Madame. Lastly, in a small bedroom on the same floor, is M. de Pontarmé, a friend of Monsieur."

"And has Madame any lovers yet?" inquires the maid.

"Not yet," replied the lackey, "but Monsieur de Mar-

sille is making eyes at her. Then, you see, his windows open on the same balcony, which is quite promising."

Uncle Genevoix comes in to see his relatives. He is still on friendly terms with them, although their paths have diverged. He is amazed at the fine-lady airs of the maid, and amused at the mock-gentleman airs of the lackey. While he is waiting for Claire, who is dressing, Pontarmé enters, accompanied by Gaspard. They are talking of the night before at the club. The elegant Gaspard, who wears a single eye-glass and a gardenia in his buttonhole, tells Pontarmé of his winning a hundred louis on the race course the day before, but adds that he went to a little supper party with some actresses and lost all his money at cards after supper. He leaves some letters for René, and then goes out to purchase some favours for the cotillion, which he is to lead that evening. Genevoix asks who this fashionable gentleman may be, and to his amazement is told that Gaspard is the cashier of the New House.

René at last returns, and is frankly glad to see his uncle. Genevoix says he is waiting for Claire, but the maid tells him she never is dressed at so early an hour. It is now five in the afternoon. René assents, saying that he never sees her himself in the morning. They have separate apartments, and he goes out every morning for his canter. Back from his ride at eleven o'clock he breakfasts at the club, looks over the papers, smokes a cigar, goes to the stock exchange for a while, and then comes home.

"But how about the business?" asks the uncle.

"The business!" replies René, "oh, it goes by itself in the New House."

René then rapidly sketches a long list of dinners, teas, suppers, theatre-parties, and drives to the races which take up all of his and Claire's time, both night and day. To this recital Uncle Genevoix listens with growing disgust, and

finally departs, saying that he will call again to see Claire when she is up, and "when it is not so early."

After the departure of Uncle Genevoix, René entrusts a letter to Pontarmé. It seems that this valued friend of the family is acting as a bearer of *billet-doux* between René and Mlle. Mandarinine, the lady upstairs with the orange hair.

Their discussion of this intrigue is interrupted by the arrival of Claire and Théodosie. Claire tells René that she will not dine at home, as she and Théodoise are going to dine at the restaurant; from there they go to the theatre, where Théodosie has a box. Claire picks up the evening paper to see what the performance is, and to her delight finds something of interest there. She cries: "Why, René, what do you think I have found? Here are our names—yours and mine—in the paper! It says: '*Among those present at the Brazilian Ambassador's ball was the charming Mme. Pillerat attired in a dainty costume as a Summer Mist, which showed her beautiful figure to extreme advantage. M. Pillerat, one of our leading commercial gentlemen, wore the costume of a lobster.*'"

René is as delighted as is Claire at this evidence of their social advancement.

On the heels of this agreeable discovery the Comte de Marsille is announced, rather to Claire's surprise, as she does not know that gentleman. He comes to say that the concierge informs him of his neighbours' desire that the board partition on the balcony be removed, as it obstructs the view from Madame's window.

"But," interrupts Claire, somewhat curtly, "I made no such request."

"It was I, my dear," said René. "Don't you remember you told me it interrupted your view of the boulevard?"

"Really, René," replies Claire, "it was only a passing remark. I cannot think of asking this gentleman to remove

the partition; on second thought, I do not desire it removed."

"I beg of you, Madame," interrupts M. de Marsille, "to say no more about it." And he enters into so subtle a protestation, in which he affects to believe that Claire desires the partition removed, but does not wish to trouble him to remove it, that the young woman finally grows confused. She is not used to the deferential manner, the polished flattery, of a man of the world like de Marsille. He is gazing at her with bold eyes, while he protests his desire to consult her wishes in the matter, yet at the same time forcing her to accede to his own. He is aided by her foolish husband, who is so delighted at having a nobleman under his roof that he can scarcely contain himself. When de Marsille takes his departure it is understood that the partition on the balcony between his apartment and Claire's is to be removed.

In the third act, the salon of the New House is being prepared by workmen for a grand ball. René and Claire have had some twenty-five "intimate" friends at dinner, and their dear five hundred friends are bidden to the ball which is to follow the dinner. Pontarmé is advising René about the arrangement of the decorations. These, it would appear, have been hired for the night—hangings, rugs, tapestries, jardinières, plants, silver, crystal, and candelabra. Pontarmé asks about the price, which René tells him; he also confides to Pontarmé that he is a little pinched for money, and must meet a note for sixty thousand francs the following day, as Mlle. Mandarine is costing him a good deal of money. He suggests that Pontarmé should lend him thirty or forty thousand francs. Pontarmé replies that he has no money at all, and lives by dining with his friends, getting commissions on their clothes from tailors, on their horses from horse-dealers, and on their pictures from picture-dealers. René suggests that Pontarmé must have got

a commission on the horses he sold to him. Whereat Pontarmé grins, and admits that he did.

They are interrupted by Claire, who has left her guests to confer with René about the cotillion, which is to be led by Gaspard, the cashier of the New House. Gaspard comes in with some favours.

Pontarmé says to him in a low voice: "I hear you have been hit pretty hard in the stock market, old man."

"Yes, yes," replies Gaspard, hastily. "I have had a little bad luck."

"Bad luck, eh?" continues the pitiless Pontarmé. "Is that why you sold all your pictures and your horses at auction this morning?"

"So you have heard that?" says Gaspard. "Hush, don't say anything about it." And he turns with his cotillion favours to confer with Claire.

Claire can hardly keep her eyes open in talking with him, and dismisses him in a few moments. She tells her Uncle Genevoix, who is concerned about her appearance, that she has been suffering lately from sleeplessness. Her doctor had prescribed a sleeping potion; as she felt so tired that afternoon, she had taken a few drops, but it was more powerful than she had expected, and she was irresistibly impelled to sleep. Genevoix advises her to go to her boudoir for a little sleep, if only for a few moments. But at this moment, M. de Marsille enters, offers her his arm, and saluting Genevoix, they go toward the ball-room.

Uncle Genevoix is looking for René. He has heard of his nephew's financial embarrassment. He wants to know the figure of his debts. Poor René is obliged to make a clean breast of it. It is necessary, for the hard-hearted uncle apparently knows all, even about the expensive lady with the bleached hair. He strikes a rapid balance, and shows René that he must without fail have one hundred and fifty thousand francs on hand in the morning. René's

countenance falls, but it suddenly lights up as he says: "I can surely borrow at least half of that among the friends I have here to-night." Uncle Genevoix shakes his head with a sardonic smile as René starts out upon his quest.

As they leave the room, Claire and M. de Marsille enter. Claire's head is still in a whirl, partly from the waltz and partly from the drug she has taken. She tells de Marsille of her somnolent condition, seats herself, and asks him to stand in front of her and shield her from view as if he were talking to her, while she endeavours to snatch a few moments' sleep. De Marsille immediately seizes the opportunity and presses his suit. He tells her that she is worthy of a more brilliant sphere in life than to be the wife of a shop-keeper. He sneers at René. He paints a picture of Claire with him in a palace at Venice, decked with diamonds, attended like a queen.

"Hush! you know I am sleeping," she murmurs drowsily.

He becomes bolder with her lack of resistance, and declares he will come to her window that evening, by way of the balcony.

"Stop!" she says, warningly. "I am waking."

But the fiery de Marsille will not be repulsed. He vows he will come to her window, and will enter if she leaves it unfastened.

"Monsieur," says Claire, rising suddenly, "I told you that I was waking. Now I am awake. Go, sir!"

De Marsille attempts to make peace with the offended beauty, but they are interrupted by Gaspard, who has come to claim a dance; as she gives Gaspard her arm, René excitedly enters.

"Let this dance go," says René. "How much money have you on hand, Gaspard?"

The cashier looks at him with ill-concealed terror. "About ninety thousand francs," he replies.

"And how much do you collect to-morrow?"

"Twenty-seven thousand."

"And how much is there to pay?"

"One hundred and twelve thousand four hundred and thirty-two francs."

"Then you think we have enough?" asks René.

"Oh, yes, Monsieur, I think so."

"Nevertheless," replies René, "let us go over the cash-book and count the cash on hand. Go down at once to the office, light up, and open the safe."

Gaspard turns a ghastly colour. Claire asks him if he is ill.

"No, Madame," he replies, "I am a little dizzy from the waltzing and the heated air. I will go to my room and get the key of the safe."

Théodosie enters. She has just come from the opera, and she brings news from the ministry of foreign affairs which will send up the stock market with a bound on the following day.

René groans. "Just my luck again," he exclaims. "I have been selling stocks short for a fall, and if the market goes up five points I stand to lose 400,000 francs."

Claire is frightened at his pallor, and bids Gabrielle go for Gaspard, telling her that he is in the office of the New House, counting the cash.

Gabrielle returns in a few moments, saying, "He is not there."

"But he must be there!" cries René.

"No," replies Gabrielle, "he is not there. The office is lighted, the books are scattered over the desk, the safe is open, but Gaspard is gone."

They hasten to the office, and they find that Gabrielle has spoken only too truly. Not only is Gaspard gone, but

with him there is gone all the money that was in the safe to meet to-morrow's indebtedness.

By this time the agitation of the family has communicated itself to the guests. They catch a word here and there—debts, accounts, flight of the cashier, losses on the stock exchange. Soon, a rumour runs around that Gaspard has fled; that he has stolen 500,000 francs. It speedily becomes 800,000. In five minutes it has risen to 900,000, and one agitated guest says that the officers of the law are already on the way to seize everything in the house for protested drafts. The head workmen and stewards in charge of ornaments, table service, and decorations become alarmed. They are responsible for their employer's goods. Speedily the waiters and the extra lackeys are set at work, and in a few moments the amazed guests see workmen on ladders taking down portières, others rolling up tapestries, and waiters packing up silver and glass. Soon the musicians are seen folding up their music, packing up their instruments, and silently filing out. The lights begin to go out, the candelabra to disappear. Claire's insolent maid and *valet de chambre* demand their wages, and when Claire, weeping with wounded pride, tells them she has no money and offers her diamonds as security to the maid, the insolent creature says: "Why, they're no good. You know as well as I do they're paste!"

To this dialogue two cynical guests listen as they are going out. Says one to the other: "Probably a pretty bad failure." To which the other replies: "Must be a fraudulent bankruptcy, I think. Have you got a cigar, old man? Thanks." And they light their cigars in the vestibule and go out into the night.

In the fourth act, Claire is in her chamber with Gabrielle, who has learned that they need 50,000 francs in the morning; this is exactly her dot, and as she wishes to help Claire and René, she will give them her little fortune

to save the honour of the Old House. Claire is overcome with emotion; she refuses, but finally yields, saying she will accept only on condition that Uncle Genevoix approves.

As Gabrielle goes out, Claire muses: "What a dear little creature! And to think I shall never see her again! For now that I have learned of René's faithlessness, I have left my window open. De Marsille will see the light on my balcony, and when he comes I shall not remain another hour in this vile house. To think that I am under the same roof with that creature! I should have known that there was a woman in the case. René could not spend so much money in any other way. It was not for me, it was for her, and I never guessed it, fool that I was. Twenty times I have met that creature swishing her laces by me on the stair, and wearing lingerie paid for by me. I should have guessed it by her insolent smile. Yet while I was repulsing the advances of a lover on this floor, my husband on the floor above was making love to this vile woman." She begins throwing objects of apparel and toilet articles into a travelling bag. Taking up one she says: "Here is my sleeping potion. It means sleep. Taking enough of it might mean death." She starts. "What is that noise? It is he!"

It is indeed de Marsille. He has a vinous laugh, a flushed face, a confident smile. He closes the window behind him as he enters. But he sees by her face that something has happened, and asks her what it is. She tells him briefly that disaster has followed disaster; her husband has lost 300,000 francs in the stock market, and the cashier, having stolen all that remained, has fled. But worse than all, she has discovered her husband's intrigue with the woman, Mandarin, on the floor above. De Marsille makes vague attempts at consolation, but his thickly uttered platitudes at last attract the attention of the semi-hysterical Claire. She listens, at first uncomprehendingly, to his

chatter, and at last a dim suspicion steals into her mind. She approaches him, and looks into his eyes.

"You have just left table?" she asks.

"Yes, I have been to a little supper. Why do you ask?"

"Because it is easily to be seen," replies Claire, coldly, "you are not sober."

De Marsille protests in a thick utterance that he has had only a little wine, but Claire looks at him with cold eyes.

"And it is for this," she bitterly reflects, "that I am throwing my honour away! This is what they call romantic and guilty love! But this creature with the filmy eyes and the stupid laugh—can this be a romantic lover? This is not passion, it is vice. This is not love, it is debauchery. This is not intoxication, it is drunkenness. Be off, you sot, leave me!"

But Claire finds that it is difficult to manage a drunken man. De Marsille tipsily protests—first, that he will not go; next, that he will not go unless she accompanies him; then that he will not go unless she gives him something to drink. And as he, in his mixture of amorousness and drunken persistence, seizes her and will not let her go, she suddenly conceives the idea of giving him some of her sleeping potion, telling him it is a cordial that will sober him. She pours a few drops into a glass of water and bids him take it; she assures him, with feminine cajolery, that as soon as he is sobered she will listen to his suit. He drinks the potion, but looking at her, after a moment, with a silly laugh, he says:

"That doesn't sober me. I have not had enough—give me some more!" Before she can check him, he seizes the vial and drains it to the last drop. As he does so, he looks at her strangely.

"What is that stuff?" he says, thickly. "What a devilish queer taste! It's bitter; it tastes like opium. I

wonder if it is opium? Oh, my head! My God! What is happening to me? I cannot see! Air! Air! Give me air!"

With these words he falls at full length on the floor between the door of her bedroom and the sofa.

Claire is overcome with horror. She throws herself upon the limp body and strives to bring it back to life. She is about to call for help, but reflects that she dare not call. What could she say? How could she account for de Marsille's presence in her room? How could she explain away two damning facts—the vial of poison in his hand and a letter from her in his pocket? She feels his heart. It does not beat.

"He is dead!" she moans. "But, even if it be robbing a corpse, I must have this vial and I must have my letter."

She begins hurriedly to search his pockets with one hand, while she strives with the other to force open the cold hand which holds the vial.

While she is thus engaged, loud knocks are heard at the door. Claire is shaking with fear and horror. She hears a voice from without. It is the voice of René calling to her. He cries: "Open, Claire! It is I. I am here with the Commissary of Police."

Claire bounds toward the body, and rolls it over two or three times, dragging the sofa before it. Then, when it is half concealed, she opens the door.

The Commissary of Police enters with René, and apologises for the lateness of his visit. He has just been to the office examining the safe, and has made a formal statement of the condition of affairs, which he wishes her and René to sign. René says he will go to her bedroom for ink and pen. If he does so, reflects Claire, he will pass the sofa and surely see the body. With a wild shriek Claire restrains him, and points to ink and pens on a table in the corner. He looks at her in astonishment, and goes to get

them there. As he is about to present the pen to her, the Commissary of Police walks round the table to put the paper before her. Thus he almost comes within view of the body of de Marsille. With another scream, Claire almost forces him and René to seat themselves on the sofa, the very sofa behind which lies the body of de Marsille. The officer also looks at her in astonishment, but she signs her name, and they both go out with the papers, leaving her in her chamber alone with the body.

In the last act we find ourselves in the Old House at the sign of the "Old Cockade." René, Uncle Genevoix, and Gabrielle are there, and René, with tears in his eyes, is explaining to Gabrielle why he cannot accept the offer of her *dot* to save the firm. But Uncle Genevoix, whose eyes are also moist, says:

"Come, come, this is no time for talking; it is seven o'clock. The banking hour is ten, and we have three hours in which to find 50,000 francs."

"But," timidly interposes Gabrielle, "I have the 50,000 francs. I can't see why you won't take my money."

Both René and Uncle Genevoix smile, and tell her that she "doesn't understand business." Genevoix then rapidly produces papers for René to sign with him before the notary; thus they will raise on their notes 60,000 francs, and Genevoix has raised on his own notes 40,000 francs, which leaves them only 50,000 short. But René's countenance brightens when Genevoix explains that L'Aubépin, an old friend of the Old House, a plain, retired clerk, is coming with 50,000 francs to help René out. René turns crimson, as he explains to his uncle that L'Aubépin had once called to see them at the famous New House at dinner-time, and had sent in word that he would take pot-luck with them; but they had Count de Marsille and some other swells with them, and René was obliged to turn L'Aubépin away. He fears that he cannot accept a favour from an

old friend whom they had treated so shabbily. But L'Aubépin enters in the midst of this shamefaced confession, slaps him on the back, and thrusts into his hand a bundle of banknotes, saying: "Pshaw, René, it was all my fault. I ought not to have come when you had a dinner-party on hand. You'll forgive me, won't you?"

Genevoix here brings in Gudin, the faithful veteran who has served the Old House as cashier for forty years, and who once in a financial panic pulled them through with his savings of a lifetime. Gudin is given the accounts of the elegant cashier Gaspard, is informed how matters stand, and he starts for the desk of the fugitive. He is confident that with the 60,000 francs on hand he can tide over the more urgent creditors and pay slowly until they get in money enough to carry them through the fateful day. René accompanies the veteran cashier from the Old House to the New.

Uncle Genevoix remains behind to meet the notary with the papers. But he is surprised by the entrance of Claire, who has just come from the New House to the Old, bareheaded and excited. Her uncle bids her be calm, for matters are so arranged that the obligations will be met and the firm pulled through. But Claire pays little heed to his remarks, and goes on in a half hysterical way to tell him that she is in fear of arrest. When he asks her why, she shudderingly replies that she has killed a man. Genevoix thinks that she is mad, but when he interrogates her she tells him a man came to her room at night by way of the balcony; that he is still in her room, and she believes him to be dead. When Genevoix asks her if it is "her lover, de Marsille," she repudiates with indignation the accusation, and says de Marsille never was her lover. She tells Genevoix that de Marsille came to her room by the balcony and would not leave; she had been weak enough to write him a letter which he refused to return to her; he was not

sober, and seizing a sleeping potion, which she had there, drank it at a gulp, and fell to the floor a corpse. Claire tells how she tried to take the letter from his person, but was interrupted; and fearing discovery by the Commissary of Police, who was in the building, she had fled; she had been roaming the streets like a mad woman ever since, and finally had come to the Old House.

Here Pontarmé enters, much excited, and tells them that he has just come from the New House, where the body of de Marsille has been found in Claire's room; it was believed there were traces of life, and they sent for the doctor; René, who was there, would be back at the Old House almost immediately. Pontarmé adds that when René was leaving the room where de Marsille lay, he had expressed a violent desire to see Claire.

Even as he is speaking, René enters, and Claire trembles. René is waving a telegram. He says that while he was at the bedside of de Marsille, over whom the doctors were working, a telegram was brought to him, saying that the cashier, Gaspard, had been arrested on the frontier with all the funds upon him that he had taken from René's safe.

"While I was reading it," says René, "poor de Marsille, upon whom the doctor had been working so long, opened his eyes. He looked at me with a singular expression, uttering indistinct words, which sounded something like 'the letter, the letter.' At first nobody knew what letter he meant, but, on looking around, both the doctor and I noticed a piece of paper on the floor twisted into a wad. The doctor picked it up, and unrolled it as if to read it. But I saw poor de Marsille's face so contorted with anguish, and his hands so trembling with nervousness, that I could not contain myself; and tearing the letter from the doctor's hands I cried: 'Stop—he does not want it read,' and I tore it into a thousand pieces."

Genevoix looks at Claire with an encouraging smile,

and she bursts into tears and throws her arms around her husband's neck.

Genevoix receives a note announcing that the run on the house of Pillerat has ceased, as cashier Gudin has met all obligations promptly. But none the less they decide that instead of leasing the Old House and occupying the New, they will leave the New House and occupy the Old. Fresh articles of partnership are thereupon signed, with Gabrielle and the young clerk André, her lover, as additional partners, under the name and style of the "Old Cockade."

LES MERVEILLEUSES

THOSE who reproach Sardou with lack of originality are obviously in the wrong. There are few who have succeeded in putting upon the stage so many environments new to the stage. It may be at times that his plays or parts of his plays resemble those of other writers, but who can deny that before the eyes of audiences he has placed detached bits of our nineteenth century life, hitherto unknown upon the stage? Take the rebuilding of Paris, by Baron Haussmann, in "Maison Neuve." Take the opening up of the provinces to railways in "Les Ganachés." Take the exploitation of gambling-houses in "Fernande"; of diplomatic intrigue as in "Dora"; of the winter life of the idle rich at Nice as in "Odette," or the hysterical gaiety of the days of the Directory, as in "Les Merveilleuses."

The plot of the piece is of the lightest. The young and beautiful Illyrine has secured a divorce, in those easy days of divorce, from her husband, Dorlis. But Dorlis returns from the army of Italy, crowned with laurels, on the very day that Illyrine is consoling herself for her wrecked life with citizen St. Amour, Secretary of Director Barras. She suddenly sees that she has been mistaken, that she loves only Dorlis, and she marries him all over again, under the name of Dorival.

Such is the light plot, as light and diaphanous as the gauzy textures in which the beautiful Directory maids and matrons of the time were costumed, for the piece fairly riots in costume. It was indeed a picturesque time. There were, of course, not wanting those who accused Sardou of borrowing from other writers. In this particular case, they said that he had been made envious by the great success of the opera of "Madame Angot." Apart from the

fact that both pieces are laid in the time of the Directory, there is no resemblance. There is a book by Jules Claretie entitled "Les Muscadins," the scene of which is also laid in the Directory time, and which has the same colour as Sardou's play; in fact, the two phrases, "Les Muscadins," and "Les Merveilleuses," mean the same thing. Both are slang terms for the young dandies, male and female, of the period of the Directory, probably the most picturesque time, in point of costume, since the world began. Sardou took the handsome actresses through whom he introduced the rôles, and had them make up after famous portraits by Boilly, D'Isabey, Vernet, and St. Aubin. By entrusting this department to the able hands of Eugène La Coste, he was able to place on the stage a series of most brilliant tableaux. Sardou's subtle taste in the matter of bric-a-brac is well known, and it found in this piece a congenial field for its display, for the dramatist always felt specially at home in the picturesque period of the Directory.

The period indeed was not only a picturesque, but a strange one. Life seemed made up of dancing, drinking, flirting, and riotous living. The most gorgeous luxury; the most shameful corruption in government bureaus; the most shameless vice in social circles; mad festivals going on in the city; platoons of soldiers being shot down on the plains outside the city; political exiles being deported to the poisonous shores of Cayenne; the Paris streets filled with material filth, due to the neglect of unpaid government employees; the stench of physical and moral filth disguised by the perfume of musk and millefleurs,—such was the decadent society which General Bonaparte crushed when he overturned the Directory, and such this striking epoch which Sardou chose for the framework of his play "Les Merveilleuses."

FERNANDE

As in the case of many of his plays, Sardou was accused of borrowing the plot of "Fernande" from earlier writers. In this case it was said that he took the plot from a romance by Diderot, in which a gentlewoman, abandoned by her lover, avenges herself by inveigling him into a marriage with a lost woman. But there are others who claim that they detect the influence of Alexandre Dumas, rather than that of Diderot, in "Fernande." If these critics differ so radically, it is possible that Sardou may have taken it from both, from another source, or from none. It would seem that the resemblance to the modern playwright is simply in the choice of environment, for Sardou in "Fernande" has chosen for a setting what Dumas called in his plays "the demi-monde."

The first act of "Fernande" takes place in one of the luxurious gambling hells which have always been common in the French capital. There is nothing exactly like them elsewhere. They are generally kept by a woman, who passes herself off as the widow of a general or a diplomat, and who may or may not have been a lady. She is usually a person of education, and clever enough to be dangerous. She surrounds herself with a circle of adventurers and adventuresses, card sharpers and worse, and this gang of harpies prey upon whatever luckless scion of a wealthy family or rich stranger may fall into their clutches. The pretence is kept up that the establishment is a private house. Hence, the police, as a rule, are powerless. But these establishments are closely watched, and on the first indication of an obviously criminal act, they are broken up, and the principals arrested, if possible. Usually, however, such an outcry is raised over "invasion of a private domicile,"

that this, together with the silence of the plucked pigeon, leads to the defeat of the law. The police rarely accomplish anything more than closing the house.

The establishment in which the first act of "Fernande" takes place is kept by Madame Sénéchal. There is with her a beautiful girl, Fernande, one of those unfortunate "flowers of the pavement," of which Paris is so full; of a good heart despite her evil training, but devoted to vice almost from her infancy; led astray—abused—perhaps outraged—even that is hinted at in the play. There is a certain Marquis who frequents the gambling house of Madame Sénéchal. The Marquis is represented as being a conceited fop, but handsome enough to win the admiring glances of many women. A lady of position and wealth, Madame Clotilde, has fallen in love with him, and he has promised to marry her, but he is such a fatuous Lovelace that he wrings her heart and humiliates her pride every day by his gross flirtations. He even relates to her his adventures as he follows shop girls, or ogles actresses in the minor theatres. He makes her his confidant concerning all his amorous affairs. At last he awakens within her such a sentiment of anger that she determines to be revenged upon him for his insults, and her revenge takes the form of entrapping him into a marriage with Fernande. The unfortunate girl is led to believe that he knows of her past and is marrying her with open eyes. After the marriage has taken place, both of them learn the truth, he that she is a lost woman, she that he believed she was an honest woman.

LA PAPILLONNE

THIS piece was a failure when produced at the Comédie-Française in 1862, but after Sardou had written "La Famille Benoiton," "Rabagas," "La Haine," "Dora," "Les Bourgeois de Pont-Arcy," and "Daniel Rochat," he determined to put on this early play again. It was reproduced on October 2, 1880, at the Gymnase Theatre. This time the piece was a great success.

The plot is simple. Monsieur de Champignac is a newly married man, but although just become a benedict, he is seized with that malady which sometimes attacks the newly married man, and which Sardou calls "butterflying." The meaning of the term is obvious. De Champignac is one of those men who cannot be constant to any one woman—particularly in her absence. For the moment he is separated from his wife, who has gone to a country-house at Melun, which she is engaged in preparing for their occupancy. Her devoted husband, while she is thus engaged, is leading a gay life in Paris. One afternoon he sees a veiled lady—she has a beautiful figure, a trim ankle—she takes his fancy. He follows her. She goes to the railway station, she gets on the train. He gets on the same train, in the same compartment. She descends at Melun station; so does he. She drives to a handsome country house; so does he. He succeeds in accosting a modestly dressed woman, whom he takes for the stranger's maid. With her he arranges a rendezvous with the veiled lady, and he is conducted within the handsome country house with bandaged eyes. The meeting takes place with the veiled lady. Another is in the room, although he does not know it. The lady speaks with a strong Italian accent, and he kisses *her* hands with passion, and when the unfortunate

man has thoroughly committed himself, she lifts the bandage from his eyes, and he finds that he is in his own country house, and making love to his own wife.

It was said that when the piece was originally produced at the Comédie-Française, it was considered too much in the vein of the Palais-Royal; further, that if it had been played at the Palais-Royal, it would have been considered too much in the style of the Comédie-Française. However, a play lying between these two extremes seemed to be admirably placed at the Gymnase, and there it was very successful.

LES GANACHES

THE plot of "Les Ganaches" presents a contrast between the ancient régime and the modern world; between the aristocracy and the mercantile spirit; it discusses the fusion of classes brought about by conventional marriages. These themes have largely furnished plots for plays ever since the end of the French Revolution. Nevertheless, Sardou has been accused of borrowing his plot from two plays, "Mademoiselle de Seiglière," by Jules Sandeau, and "Par Droit de Conquête," by E. Legouvé. There is not much resemblance between "Les Ganaches" and the supposed models. In the case of Sardou's play, the hero is the grandson of a nobleman's steward, and in Sandeau's play he is the son of a farmer on a nobleman's estate. Legouvé in his play was one of the first to utilise engineers as dramatic characters in a play. Sardou has done the same in this piece, but certainly the rôle of the engineer can scarcely be considered as patented by his predecessors. Sardou introduced the character to good advantage. His engineer, Marcel Cavalier, represents in the fossilised home at Quimperlé modern science, steam, and electricity, and the contrast between these powerful agents of modern life and the mouldy ruins of aristocratic superstition, found in the ancient family there, is a striking one.

The play may be sketched in few words. The Marquis de la Rochepéans is the head of the fossil family. He represents in his person everything that is reactionary, everything that is opposed to modern progress. He pushes his conservatism so far in the play that he moves heaven and earth to prevent his little village of Quimperlé from obtaining a railway, which the engineer, Marcel Cavalier, is about to run through the place. When this play was pro-

duced the critics mocked at such a ridiculous instance of conservatism. But Sardou—always a fighter—proved that not many years before, the city of Beauvais, when threatened with the passage of one of the great Northern railways through its precincts, set on foot against it the most powerful influences at its command. When it succeeded, and the joyful tidings were brought that the ancient city was not to be desecrated by the modern vandals of the railway, bonfires were lighted on the street corners, and the entire city was illuminated.

Of course, there is a love-story in the piece, and the prejudices of the ancient régime are overturned by the energy of the younger element. Sardou's favourite character—materialist, atheist, good-natured, philosophical—appears in this play under the name of Vauclin. He serves as an excellent foil for the reactionary Marquis.

LA SORCIERE

IN "La Sorcière" the scene is laid at Toledo in 1507, the very year in which Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros was appointed Grand Inquisitor of Castille. His entry upon that office was signalised by an outburst of fanaticism. The persecution of the Jews and Moors waxed ever fiercer and fiercer. The cruelty born of bigotry, racial and religious animosities, and the love story, form the groundwork.

In describing his heroine, Zoraya, Sardou recalled to a friend how more than fifty years before when he was a young man he "dabbled" in medicine, and became keenly interested in the phenomena of what we now call hypnotic suggestion. "Little by little," he said, "as the study of it developed into a science, it occurred to me that hypnotism explained all that the Middle Ages believed to be sorcery. There were no sorcerers or sorceresses. Those that declared they were such and those that hunted and condemned them were equally absurd. There was only hypnotic suggestion."

The first act of "La Sorcière" is set in a beautiful ravine near Toledo. Don Enrique de Palacios, Captain of Crossbowmen, enters with a troop of his men. One Kalem had been hanged for breaking the law which forbade love or marriage between Christian and Infidel. The body had been cut down and buried, and it was to investigate this act of defiance that Don Enrique came. He suspects the Moorish girl Zoraya of the offence, and his neighbours when questioned lay the blame on the Sorceress, as she is called, from the occult knowledge which she had inherited with her wealth from her father, a Moorish physician. Zoraya appears on the scene, and at first Don Enrique treats her

roughly, but soon becomes more gentle in his manner, checks the archer who wishes to shoot the infidel down, and ends by falling violently in love with his beautiful visitor.

The second act introduces us into Zoraya's sumptuous home in the outskirts of Toledo. Here it is that Don Enrique visits his lady love every evening, and now, after an unexplained absence of two days, he comes to see her once again. Zoraya's original purpose was merely to inveigle her Christian lover as a means of taking vengeance on one of the persecutors of her race. She, too, finally falls in love, and Don Enrique reciprocates her passion, though there are serious dangers to be encountered, for the house is watched by the spies of the Inquisition.

Here it is that one day Zoraya receives a visit from one Fatoum, a Moorish convert, who is now the dueña in charge of Juana, the daughter of Don Lopez de Padilla, the Governor of Toledo. Juana, who is to be married that very day to Don Enrique, suffers from somnambulism, and it is to effect a cure that Fatoum brings her to Zoraya's house. The latter sends Juana into an hypnotic sleep, and promises to go to the Governor's palace to complete the cure. On the way Zoraya hears a joyous pealing of bells, and on inquiring the cause learns that it is for the wedding of Don Enrique and Juana. She utters a cry of rage and despair.

In the third act we have the celebration of the nuptials. The inner courtyard of Don Enrique's house is crowded with wedding guests, and other visitors, including some familiars of the Inquisition, rejoiced at the prospective resumption of *auto-da-fés*. Anxious on Zoraya's behalf, Don Enrique goes to his nuptial chamber and finds her on the threshold. She had just hypnotised Juana into a profound sleep. Zoraya demands from Don Enrique an account of his supposed betrayal. Mutual explanations are soon made, but the meeting is interrupted by Cardenos, a familiar sent by the Holy Office to arrest Zoraya on a charge of

witchcraft and poisoning. Don Enrique defends her. A terrible struggle ensues; Cardenos is strangled and his corpse left lying on the ground. The two lovers then fly through the town, pursued by the bigoted rabble.

In the fourth act, Zoraya and Don Enrique, who had been arrested by the mob, are brought into the Grand Hall of the Palace of the Inquisition. Don Enrique is a good Catholic and the Governor's son-in-law. Cardinal Ximenes, the president of the Court, therefore is bent on finding him innocent, though he has confessed to his intercourse with Zoraya, his projected flight, and the murder of the familiar.

Zoraya foils all attempts of Ximenes to entangle her, and stoutly denies her intercourse with Satan. But the crafty Cardinal finds means to browbeat two witnesses into supporting the charge of witchcraft, and by holding out a prospect of safety for Don Enrique, induces Zoraya to make a supreme sacrifice. She performs a sudden *volte-face*, and with passionate exaltation proclaims herself a witch. She is forthwith condemned to die by fire.

The scene in the fifth act represents a street in Toledo near the Cathedral. The dirge of the exorcists is heard as they endeavour to rouse Juana from her cataleptic sleep. In the square stands the stake all ready for Zoraya's execution. Don Enrique has arranged with the executioner to shorten her torments, and Fatoum has given her a deadly poison. The dénouement is delayed. Zoraya alone can waken Juana, and the Governor promises to pardon her if she will perform that miracle. Juana is roused from her coma, and Zoraya is about to fly with her lover, who at last realises her devotion, when the fanatical populace, stirred up by the monks, intercept their flight and pin them against the cathedral doors.

The two lovers have now no resource left but suicide. Locked in a last embrace, they crush, as their lips meet, the vial of poison, and death delivers them from the flames.

ROBESPIERRE

THE opening scene of "Robespierre" is laid in the forest of Montmorency. The play begins with a meeting between Mr. Vaughan, a Whig member of the House of Commons, who had been sent to France with peace proposals, and a Madame de Mauluson, with whose family he was on intimate terms. M. de Mauluson, who had recently died in London, had fought in the Vendée against the Republic, and his whole family was suspected of disaffection. Mme. Clarisse de Mauluson has a niece, Marie Thérèse, and a son, Olivier, whose real father was Robespierre himself, when he was still a young lawyer and secretary to a Counsellor of the Parlement of Paris.

Vaughan has his appointed interview with Robespierre, who declines his proposals. The Dictator is at the height of his power, and the recent passage of Couthon's Law of Prairial on June 10, 1794, had made the Reign of Terror more violent than ever. Vaughan had also taken the opportunity to request for Madame de Mauluson and her son and niece a passport to quit France. Toward the end of the act, Le Bas, the member of the Convention, and Cabinet-maker Duplay, with all his family, drive up, and invite Robespierre to breakfast *al fresco*.

In the second act young Olivier is searching for his mother and cousin Marie Thérèse, of whose arrest he is aware, and finds them at the Bourbe prison. A vivid scene describes life in the prison and the calling over of the names picked by the Revolutionary Tribunal for the next batch of victims. The hatred of Olivier for Robespierre is whetted to an extreme pitch.

On the next day, while Robespierre is attending the fête of the "Supreme Being," a voice from the crowd

shouts: "Down with the tyrant! down with the guillotine!" It is Olivier, who is forthwith arrested by order of Robespierre.

The third act represents a domestic scene at the house of the Duplay family. Robespierre is there, enjoying the quiet of domesticity. Suddenly the music is interrupted by the entrance of Olivier, who is brought in as a prisoner to be questioned by Robespierre. One of the papers taken from him proves to be in the handwriting of the Counsellor whose secretary he had been and whose daughter Clarisse he had seduced before she became Madame de Mauluson. In fact, Olivier is his own son.

Robespierre is deeply agitated, and in spite of the insults heaped upon him by the young man, resolves to effect his rescue and save him from the guillotine. But he is afraid to do so too openly, as the disturbance at the fête of the Supreme Being was too notorious.

A letter from Mme. de Mauluson at the Bourbe is handed to Robespierre, and Olivier, wrongly inferring from a remark dropped by the Dictator that his mother is doomed, faints away, and is conveyed to prison by Robespierre's orders.

In the fourth act Madame de Mauluson and her niece, released from the Bourbe by Robespierre, are hiding in the Rue de Martray, when Clarisse has an interview with her former lover. She is naturally anxious about the fate of her son Olivier, but Robespierre tries to reassure her. Clarisse reproaches Robespierre with his murderous activity, but he defends his conduct by an appeal to the idealism of his aims. At this moment noises are heard in the streets. It is an array of tumbrils passing with a batch of victims. Clarisse appeals to him to stop the bloodshed.

Soon afterwards Le Bas returns from La Force prison to report that Olivier has been removed. He must be in that batch on the way to the guillotine. Robespierre turns

pale at the thought, and resolves to brave any peril to save him.

But Olivier is no longer a prisoner. The Committee of Public Safety, knowing his hatred of the Dictator, have released Olivier and commissioned him to slay Robespierre if the accusation they are drawing up against the Dictator should fail.

The play concludes with the fall of Robespierre and his flight from the Convention Hall to the Commune, where he shoots himself in the jaw just as Olivier is about to cut him down. Clarisse arrives in time to comfort the last moments of the dying man.

"At last the child is saved," cries Robespierre, "and you too. At least I have lived to receive your pardon."

DANTE

THE spectacular drama "Dante" opens with a prologue the scene of which is laid at Pisa. In the background is seen "The Tower of Hunger," in which the fallen tyrant Ugolino with his sons and grandsons are confined to die of starvation. First Dante enters, and meets the mother of his child Gemma, Pia dei Tolomei, the successor to Beatrice in Dante's love. Then Helen of Swabia, Count Ugolino's daughter-in-law, enters, and strives to obtain mercy from the pitiless crowd, the jailors, and the ruthless archbishop Ruggieri, but in vain. Dante then expostulates with the archbishop, but is only excommunicated for his pains. The poet replies with curses, and prophesies the downfall of Pisa.

The first act opens with a springtime festival at Florence ten years afterwards. Into this gay scene—which is artistically devised to relieve the gloomy prologue—Dante enters, disguised as a monk, but is recognised by his friend Giotto, who is there working at his easel. Before long a deed of blood is wrought: maddened by jealousy, Malatesta slays his wife Francesca da Rimini and her lover Paolo. Meanwhile Dante has an interview with his natural daughter Gemma, who is in great peril. Her mother Pia, too, who has been wedded to Nello della Pietra, is confined by her husband in his castle in the Maremma to die of malaria and neglect. The pretended monk is summoned to absolve the dying woman. One result of this interview is the disclosure of the secret of Gemma's birth. Gemma appears, but before she can reach her father is hurried off by Nello to some unknown destination.

In the second act Pia dies, and Dante, having discovered the whereabouts of Gemma, goes to the convent of San Pietro to rescue her. The abbess and nuns who are in

league with Nello strive in vain to induce Gemma to take the vows. But Nello and his supporters enter with drawn swords, and when Dante attempts forcibly to carry off his daughter to a place of safety, Nello lunges at the curtain, and Dante is severely wounded in the breast and left for dead on the floor.

But the poet was not dead. His friend Castella had staunched his wounds and saved his life. In the third act we find Dante, in obedience to the behest of the spirit of Beatrice, daring the descent to Hades in the company of Virgil. This part of the play is a triumph of spectacular art. They pass through the dread portal with its awe-inspiring inscription. Charon, the City of Dis, the Fiery Tombs, and the Circle of Ice, are all visited, and the spirits of Ugolino, Ruggiero, Paolo, and Francesca parleyed with. Then over the Bridge of Rocks they pass into the Valley of Asphodels, and there amid the meads and flowers of Purgatory they encounter the spirit of Pia dei Tolomei with her attendant spirits.

The fourth act passes at the Papal Palace at Avignon, whither Dante, as a result of his interview with Pia, has gone in pursuit of Gemma. Cardinal Colonna is about to burn Gemma and her lover Bernardino as heretics, but Dante frightens the wicked Cardinal by a message from Hades to the effect that his own hour is come. Colonna falls down dead at the hour foretold, and Gemma and Bernardino are saved from their impending fate.

PAMÉLA

THE scene of "Paméla, Marchande de Frivolités," was laid in Sardou's favourite period, the Directory. The whole story of the play turns on the conspiracy to effect the escape of the boy Louis XVII., which for dramatic purposes the playwright assumes to have been successful.

In the opening of the piece we see Paul François Barras at work in his office. He is President of the Convention and a leading spirit of the Directory. Police agents and others call, and conduct their business, not without copious libations; among his visitors is Paméla, the heroine of the play, who merely comes to present a bill for payment on account of his friend Joséphine (later the wife of General Bonaparte). Director Barras is aware that a conspiracy is on foot to secure the release of the boy king, and when two royalists are brought in on suspicion of favouring the escape of Louis, Barras closely cross-examines them; but, failing to bring the charge home to them, he lets them go.

Then follows one of the most striking scenes in the play. Barras conducts a troupe of pretty women—*merveilleuses*—to the Temple, to show them the little Louis XVII. in his prison. The poor boy is brought from his apartment, and the ladies gush and express their pity; but Louis, either dazed or sullen, keeps silent. On their departure Paméla is left alone with the child. She caresses him and wins his confidence. He asks her for news of his mother, and on learning of her death, bursts into tears and faints away.

The next scene is laid in the work-shop of a cabinet-maker. The supposed workmen are conspirators in disguise, who have dug an underground passage leading into the yard of the prison. They have contrived to gain over the wardens at the Temple prison, and the laundrywoman,

who has agreed to smuggle the boy away in a basket of linen. Her courage fails her at the last moment, however, and she runs away, but the dauntless Paméla steps into the breach, and volunteers to undertake the dangerous task.

Next follows a feast at Director Barras's house. He informs Paméla that he knows everything, but entrusts to her a master-key to give her access to the Temple at all hours "on condition that the child shall be handed over to me;" for he may be useful in an emergency, and the prudent Barras wishes to be on the safe side in the event of a turn in the political wheel. Paméla then meets her patriot lover Bergerin, who has his suspicions; she confesses all to him, thereby placing that staunch republican in a sore dilemma.

Meanwhile the conspirators are just finishing their subterranean passage. They strongly suspect that one of their number is a traitor, though they are unable to identify him. The mystery is soon solved, however. By preconcerted arrangement a posse of sham police agents force their way into the passage, and arrest all the conspirators, but the traitor produces his policeman's warrant and is thus caught.

Then comes the *enlèvement*, the second effective scene in the play. On the very evening when he is to be removed, Paméla's lover Bergerin discovers the little king in the basket of linen going to the laundress. The boy, half asleep, throws his arms around Bergerin's neck, who no longer has the heart to do his duty as a citizen. He allows Paméla to carry the little fellow away to the conspirators, who are waiting for him at the entrance to the underground passage.

Once safely out of the Temple the boy is not taken to Barras, as arranged, but to an adjoining house. Barras goes to find him, but is surrounded by a troop of angry peasants armed with scythes. The pretended peasants,

making hay on the banks of the Seine, are, of course, the conspirators bent on preventing the recapture of the young King Louis. Barras, however, is equal to the occasion. He asks permission to present his respects to his Majesty Louis XVII., and when the child is brought in on a litter decked with flowers and leaves, Barras respectfully kisses his hand, time-server that he is, and assures him—all being well—of his devotion.

LA TAVERNE DES ETUDIANTS

"LA TAVERNE DES ETUDIANTS," the disastrous failure of which effectually closed the doors of all the Paris theatres to young Sardou, was first performed on Saturday, April 1, 1854. There was a triple bill that evening: "Le Jeu de l'Amour," "La Taverne des Etudiants," and "Le Laquais." The other items on the bill achieved some measure of success, and even the first act of "La Taverne" drew some signs of approval from the house. It was not till the commencement of the second act that the situation became critical, and the rest of the play was lost in a hub-hub of catcalls.

A second performance was given on Monday, April 3, but the management found it impossible to obtain a hearing for the piece, which was forthwith withdrawn. Under these circumstances the critics were working under difficulties. Yet on the whole their tone was not unkindly. They blamed the audience rather than the author. The work was immature, it was true, but it was amusing, and the verses ran smoothly enough, and so youthful a dramatist should have been treated more sympathetically by the young men of whom his audience mainly consisted.

The plot of "La Taverne des Etudiants" is of the simplest description. Leo, a young student at a German university, is found at the opening of the first act under the balcony of Linda, his beloved, and is throwing pebbles to attract his Juliet's attention. Linda promptly appears, to save her windows from being broken. She is fair and timorous, but deeply in love with Leo. Her father, M. Willer, unfortunately overhears the dialogue and the vows of marriage exchanged without his permission. The lovers

part, on the understanding that the nuptial knot is to be tied on the morrow.

Willer is furious, and in a Roman Catholic country would doubtless have sent his daughter to a convent. Just at that moment M. Carloman, a bachelor friend of Willer, calls, and succeeds in bringing him to a more reasonable frame of mind; for, after all, Willer wants his daughter to be happy, and his bark is worse than his bite. He resolves to see for himself whether this young man is worthy of his daughter. Willer and Carloman put their heads together, and form a plan, in pursuance of which, in the disguise of university students, they visit the *taverne*, which is chiefly frequented by these young gentlemen. Here, Carloman becomes fuddled with drink, and when he tries to explain the position of affairs to Leo the latter is led to believe that Willer, with whom he is personally unacquainted, is some bourgeois anxious to marry him to his daughter. But as Leo desires to wed Linda, and Linda only, he purposely begins to rap out a few energetic oaths, and then to boast of all manner of riotous living. Willer is aghast at the self-accused young desperado's language, transfers his affection to Carloman's nephew Karl, who was with the party, and in his inmost heart determines to make him his son-in-law. Leo takes advantage of this situation to slip away, and when Willer returns home he finds him tranquilly watering Madame Willer's flowers and doing his best to make himself agreeable to Linda and her mother. Willer is again furious, and turns Leo out of the house. However, he soon learns that Karl is Carloman's nephew, and that the young man is head over ears in debt. The result of this discovery is that Willer returns to his senses, a match is arranged between Leo and Linda, and all ends happily to the sound of wedding bells.

LE CROCODILE

THE opening scene of the play is laid on board the S. S. *Crocodile*, and the spectators are first of all introduced to the twenty passengers and their various amusing characteristics. They make the acquaintance of Peterbecque, the orator of the party, with his interminable discussions; of Chevrillac, the typical Parisian boulevardier; of the shiftY Greek Strapoulos, the villain of the piece. Besides these, there are the stewardess, Bertholin; Jimmy, the ship's doctor, who is head over ears in love with Olivia; Richard Kolb; Liliane; the Japanese prince, Nono-Miki; Baroness Jordeans, and the English Miss Chipsick, who is "English in France and French in England."

Scarcely have we made the acquaintance of the passengers when the alarm of fire is raised. All is terror and turmoil; the boats are launched only just in time to save every life before the *Crocodile* is engulfed in the waves.

The shipwrecked people safely land on an island of wondrous tropical vegetation, the Ile des Paletuviers, or "Mangrove Island." The first thing to do is to explore the island, and to take stock of their provisions and ammunition. The sailors show signs of a mutinous spirit, and are about to broach a keg of brandy, when Richard Kolb compels them to desist. This incipient mutiny proves the necessity of some form of government. A meeting is accordingly held, at which the women are allowed to vote, and a chief with plenary powers is elected, to whom all swear obedience. The choice falls on Richard Kolb. But opposition springs up, headed by Peterbecque and Strapoulos, supported by the crew, still angry at the loss of their brandy.

Meanwhile Kolb establishes the new society dreamed of

in his last talk with Liliane. All distinctions of rank and fortune are to be abolished, work to be provided for all, and equality and fraternity to triumph.

In the third act the camp is shifted to a forest of banyan trees in the interior of the island. When the curtain rises the village encampment is seen to be en fête in honour of the marriage of Dr. Jimmy to Miss Olivia, over whom the Rev. Mr. Coppernick, one of the shipwrecked passengers, is to pronounce the nuptial benediction. But the crew are still in a rebellious state, and object to the manual labour assigned to them. Strapoulos schemes with their aid to seize all the arms and ammunition at the height of the fête, and to capture and bind Richard Kolb. Their designs are all carried out to the letter.

The fourth act shows the conspirators assembled in council. To their alarm they find that the ammunition boxes they have seized are empty and that they have only six cartridges between them. Dr. Jimmy, whose marriage had been so disagreeably interrupted, encounters them, and Strapoulos and his gang demand the stock of ammunition, in exchange for which they will release Richard Kolb, who, however, refuses to accept his liberty on those terms.

Liliane, in her anxiety about his fate, searches for Richard, and finds him as he is on the point of effecting his escape. At that moment Strapoulos returns from a vain quest after ammunition. Richard refuses to say where it is hidden, and to the anguish of Liliane is dragged off to the nearest baobab tree.

At this juncture a sail appears on the horizon. The rest rush off to meet their deliverers, and leave Liliane in a faint and Richard Kolb with a rope around his neck. The supposed deliverers prove, however, to be Malay pirates, who carry away the entire colony, with the exception of Richard

and Liliane, whom they fail to discover. Richard manages to find an axe, and frees himself from his bonds.

In the fifth act we see the primeval tropical forest. Richard enters, bearing in his arms the swooning Liliane. Their village has been destroyed. They are alone with their love. But no—Richard does not speak of love. It is a confession he is making of his brigand life, and that he is none other than the redoubtable George Morgan.

Sardou's idea was to show his young friends that "any fault, however trifling, brings eternal remorse." Richard confesses that he had robbed his uncle under extenuating circumstances, had acknowledged his crime by letter, and expatriated himself to gain money and make restitution. Liliane at any rate pardons Richard, and desires to live with him henceforth on the deserted island.

But a ship arrives, with civilised men on board this time. The pair of lovers are forced to go on board and are taken to Batavia, where they find old friends, and learn that the old uncle was dead and had pardoned Richard, leaving him his sole heir. The play concludes with the marriage of Richard and Liliane.

The absence of a love scene when Richard and Liliane were left alone on the island was a feature that caused much adverse criticism at the first production.

LA FILLE DE TABARIN

IN the first act we find ourselves in the manor of Tabarin, the actor, who in the reign of Henry IV. and in the succeeding reign had amassed wealth and retired to Poitou to settle down as a country gentleman under the name of the Baron de Beauval, under which title he was rich, generous, and respected by all; only his maidservant Nicole was in possession of his secret.

Strangely enough, the newcomer, of whom so little was known, became on intimate terms with the neighbouring gentry, and his adopted daughter Diane was betrothed to Roger, the son of the neighbouring Count de la Brède. The objections raised by this gentleman are overcome, and the betrothal is formally announced. While the company are assembled at a gay supper to celebrate the event, voices are heard. It is a carriage full of strolling comedians in distress. Beauval wishes to send them away, but Diane pleads for them. Mondor, the leader of the troupe—who is none other than Tabarin's old chief—asks and receives the hospitality of the château.

A country fête is proceeding in the second act, and while de la Brède reviews the archers Mondor gives a performance, with small encouragement. Diane, leaning on Roger's arm, goes through the fair, and consults a gypsy woman, who foretells misfortune. With difficulty Mondor persuades Beauval to allow a performance in the orangery at the Château. Mondor recognises Tabarin, who admits all, but Mondor promises to be discreet, and arrangements are made for the performance.

The scene in the third act is Mondor's theatre in the orangery. The piece is "*Le Capitaine Mort et Ressuscité*," a play in which Tabarin had once won many triumphs. He

criticises Podel, who plays his old part, offers suggestions, and ends by mounting the stage himself, and throwing himself enthusiastically into the part. Spectators drop in to watch the rehearsal, among them the old Marquis de La-roche-Posay, who recognises Tabarin by voice and gesture. The secret is now out. The gentlemen will have no more to do with the ex-actor. He has wrecked the future of Diane, who, with Nicole, vainly tries to console him.

De la Brède is furious, and will not hear of the marriage. Horns are heard, for a hunting party is about to begin, and servants hand firearms to the gentlemen, among others to Tabarin. No sooner have Diane and Nicole, followed by Roger, returned to the house, than a shot is heard outside. A cortège of huntsmen is seen bringing back Tabarin—dying, it is supposed, from the effect of an accident while he was leaping a ditch. De la Brède alone guesses the truth. He takes Tabarin's hand and consoles him with the promise: "Your desire shall be accomplished; your daughter is my daughter." Tabarin has only time to murmur his thanks when his head falls back and he is dead.

LES BARBARES

AT the opening of this lyrical tragedy a horde of Germans is over-running the south of Gaul and laying siege to Orange. The Roman consuls, Scaurus and Euryalus, offer a desperate defence. Floria, the priestess of Vesta, gathers around her the women and children and the Vestal Virgins in the theatre which afforded a last stronghold to the Romans, and there implores heaven for victory. With her is Livia, the wife of Euryalus, who puts her faith in Roman valour, while Floria trusts that the Germans will respect the hearth of Vesta. A watcher announces the fall of Euryalus, and soon afterward Scaurus brings in his bleeding corpse and advises the women to fly while he and his few heroes sell their lives as dearly as possible.

Livia thereupon vows vengeance, and swears to slay the slayer of her husband with her own hand. Floria calms the panic of the women, but the vain resistance of Scaurus is beaten down, and Hildebrath's barbarians invade the theatre and rush at the Vestals. Marcomir their chief then enters, and confirms the murderous purpose of Hildebrath.

Suddenly, at a gesture of Floria, the altar of Vesta flames up, and the barbarians shrink back in terror, for they worship *Fire* under the name of Thor. Marcomir is subjugated by the proud beauty of Floria, converses with her, and for the present drives his warriors from their spoils.

In the second act it is night. Livia, observing the influence of Floria over Marcomir, attributes their safety to the intervention of Venus and not to Vesta. Scaurus enters, wounded, and escaping to the theatre, offers to guide the women to the Roman legions who are marching to the relief from the Alps. Floria refuses to fly, and trusts Marcomir.

Scaurus is recognised and surrenders to Hildebrath, who is about to slay him when Floria calls, not in vain, to Marcomir to save him. Marcomir now claims his reward from Floria. She is alarmed and indignant, but after a severe internal struggle consents to redeem the lives of the others and save the town. The course of a conversation reveals the innate magnanimity and delicacy of Marcomir to Floria. She feels first gratitude and then love for the conqueror.

The opening of the third act sees the departure of the Germans from Orange at daybreak, with their plunder, but respecting the dwellings of the inhabitants. Scaurus organises sacrifices and festal games and dances, and the people show their gratitude to Floria when they learn that they owe their safety to her. It is arranged for Floria to go with Marcomir. The Vestals desire to accompany her, but she will only take Livia, who is still eager to discover the slayer of her husband. During the funeral Floria discovers that it was Marcomir who had dealt the fatal blow. She resolves to keep Livia away from him, and suddenly refuses point-blank to take her. But Livia guesses it was Marcomir, and resorts to a stratagem. She accuses him of having treacherously slain the Consul by striking him in the back.

"You lie, it was in the heart," cries the angry and unsuspecting barbarian. "To the heart then," cries Livia, and stabs him to the heart. Thus by the death of Marcomir the outrage to the sanctity of Vesta and the death of Euryalus are avenged.

PART THIRD
THE SARDOU PLAYS IN THE
UNITED STATES

THE SARDOU PLAYS IN THE UNITED STATES

A SCRAP OF PAPER

IN the United States, as in London and Paris, Sardou's first success was with "Les Pattes de Mouche." The version produced in the United States was that entitled "A Scrap of Paper," the work of J. Palgrave Simpson. This was the first Palgrave Simpson version; it was written for Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan, and was played by them in England. It retained the French names and the French setting of the original Sardou play. His second version was written for the Kendals.

There seems to have been no production in the United States of Charles Matthews's version entitled "The Adventures of a Billet Doux."

The Simpson version was first produced in New York City, at Wallack's Theatre, on March 10, 1879. The cast included Lester Wallack, as Prosper Couramont; John Gilbert, as Brise-mouche; and Rose Coghlan, as Suzanne. Others in the cast were Charles Rockwell, N. S. Wood, C. E. Edwin, J. Peck, Stella Boniface, Effie Germon, Kate Bartlett, E. Blaisdell, Pearl Eytinge.

The play ran to large business for seven weeks; a good run for those days.

The play was produced at the Brooklyn Park Theatre in September, 1879, with Ed. Lamb as Brisemouche, and Rosa Rand as Suzanne.

It was revived at Wallack's Theatre, in January, 1880, when Tom Jefferson (son of Joseph Jefferson) played Anatole, and Suzanne was played by Ada Dyas.

At the Grand Opera House, New York City, it was given in March, 1880, members of the company being N. S. Wood, J. W. Shannon, W. H. Lytell, and Kate Meet, the latter playing Suzanne.

Another revival took place at Wallack's Theatre on February 29, 1881, when Rose Coghlan was again the Suzanne.

Yet again was the play revived at Wallack's Theatre on April 23, 1884, when the Suzanne was Louise Moodie. Again the Prosper was Lester Wallack; it was his first appearance after a long illness, and Louise Moodie's first appearance in the part; again the play was highly successful.

At the Lyceum Theatre, New York City, in December, 1886,

the play was produced with E. H. Sothern as Prosper, and Helen Dauvray as Suzanne; the lady was once known to the variety stage as "Little Nell, the California Diamond." That E. H. Sothern once played "Prosper" will not be remembered by many. A year later at the same theatre the play was revived with Helen Dauvray and others.

At the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on October 7, 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, and their English company, gave the second Palgrave-Simpson version. "Colonel Blake" (who was Prosper Couramont) was played by Mr. Kendal. "Susan Hartley" (ci-devant Suzanne) by Mrs. Kendal.

The second Palgrave-Simpson version was made for Mr. and Mrs. Kendal. In this version the French names were changed to English, and the scene was set in an English country-house.

A little later, in 1890, at the Harlem Opera House, New York, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal revived their version, and again at Palmer's Theatre, New York, in 1891 and 1892; at the Star Theatre in 1892 and in 1894; and again at Abbey's Theatre, New York, in 1895. Again they revived it at the Harlem Opera House some months later. In all these seasons they were successful.

At the Garrick Theatre, New York, on October 23, 1905, Henrietta Crosman presented "a new adaptation" of the play entitled, "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary." Miss Crosman played the part of "Mary" (ci-devant Suzanne). The other members of the company were Addison Pitt, Mirian Nesbitt, Louise Galloway, Kate Jepson, John Marble, George Woodward, Ida Vernon, Walter Thomas, Boyd Putnam, C. A. Chandos.

The critics did not seem to think highly of the "new adaptation," which, they said, was merely "an adaptation of an adaptation"—the old and well-known Simpson version. Furthermore, they objected to the changing of the names and nationality of the characters from French to English—as, for example, Prosper was transformed from a gay French man of the world to an English globe-trotter.

DIPLOMACY

THE version of the Sardou play "Dora" called "Diplomacy" (by Scott and Stephenson), was first played in the United States at Wallack's Theatre, New York, on April 1, 1878, with this cast:

<i>Henry Beauclerc</i>	LESTER WALLACE
<i>Capt. Julian Beauclerc</i>	H. J. MONTAGUE
<i>Count Orloff</i>	FREDERIC ROBINSON
<i>Algis Fairfax</i>	W. R. LLOYD

by Frederic Robinson. At the American Theatre, in 1894, Rose Coghlan revived the play.

In 1898 at the Columbus Theatre it was produced by a stock company. The same year at the Herald Square Theatre it was again revived by another stock company.

After a lapse of several years, "Diplomacy" was produced at the Empire Theatre, New York, on April 15, 1901, by the Empire Stock Company. The cast follows:

<i>Henry Beauclerc</i>	WILLIAM FAVERSHAM
<i>Capt. Julian Beauclerc</i>	CHARLES RICHMAN
<i>Count Orloff</i>	GUY STANDING
<i>Dora</i>	MARGARET ANGLIN
<i>Countess Zicka</i>	JESSIE MILLWARD
<i>Lady Henry Fairfax</i>	ETHEL HOERNICK
<i>Marquise de Rio Zares</i>	MRS. THOMAS WHIFFEN
<i>Baron Stein</i>	EDWIN STEVENS

Again after a period of years, the play was revived—this time with a new version by George Pleydell. The production took place at Maxine Elliott's Theatre, New York, on September 13, 1910, with this cast:

<i>Henry Beauclerc</i>	CHARLES RICHMAN
<i>Julian Beauclerc</i>	MILTON SILLS
<i>Count Orloff</i>	THURLOW BERGEN
<i>Algie Fairfax</i>	EFFINGHAM PINTO
<i>Baron Stein</i>	THEODORE ROBERTS
<i>Markham</i>	FREDERICK ESMELTON
<i>Sheppard</i>	LESLIE BASSETT
<i>Antoine</i>	C. E. HARRIS
<i>Countess Zicka</i>	FLORENCE ROBERTS
<i>Dora</i>	CRYSTAL HEARNE
<i>Marquise de Rio Zares</i>	MRS. LE MOYNE
<i>Lady Fairfax</i>	MARION BALLOU
<i>Mion</i>	JEWELL POWER

The New York critics seemed to think that the earlier productions were better played.

FEDORA

AMONG the Sardou plays most frequently produced in the United States, "Fedora" stands near the head. It was produced on circuit all over the United States by the late Fanny Davenport. The casts of all these productions are not given here, as they were practically identical with those of her companies when she played in New York, which will be found below.

"Fedora" was first played in America at Haverly's Theatre (later the Fourteenth Street Theatre), on October 2, 1883, "Fedora" being played by Fanny Davenport, and "Loris Ipanoff" by

Robert Mantell. Others in the cast were: Ada Monck, Helen Bertram, and S. C. Dubois. On this first production "Fedora" had a run of three months. It was revived at Haverly's Theatre in November, 1884. Again the "Fedora" was Fanny Davenport. This time "Loris Ipanoff" was played by Henry Lee, and "Countess Olga" by Blanche Weaver. It was revived at Niblo's Theatre, New York, in January, 1885, "Fedora" again played by Miss Davenport, and at the Grand Opera House in March, 1885, with the same actress in the name part. Two years later at the People's Theatre, New York, on December 27, 1887, Miss Davenport again produced the play. This time "Loris Ipanoff" was played by J. H. Barnes, and "Countess Olga" by Genevieve Lytton.

At another revival at the Star Theatre, New York, in April, 1887, Miss Davenport was again supported by R. B. Mantell as "Ipanoff." Later in the same year she gave the play at the Grand Opera House, New York; this time "Loris Ipanoff" was played by Melbourne MacDowell, and "Countess Olga" by Judith Beroide. Four years later she produced the play once more at the Broadway Theatre, New York, on April 27, 1891.

The play was produced in Italian at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on February 27, 1893, when "Fédora" was played by Eleonora Duse, and "Loris Ipanoff" by Signor Ando.

A week earlier, at the same theatre, on February 21, 1893, a "special professional matinee" was given, at which Signora Duse appeared as "Fédora" with her Italian company.

That, beside Fanny Davenport, only Eleonora Duse and Sarah Bernhardt appeared in "Fedora" in the United States is due to the fact that Miss Davenport had purchased the exclusive English rights for this country from Sardou. She died in 1898, leaving her plays to her husband, Melbourne MacDowell. In 1900 Mr. MacDowell sold to Clarence M. Brune the rights which Miss Davenport had owned in Sardou's plays of "Fédora," "Cléopâtre," "La Tosca," and "Gismonda."

"Fédora" was produced by Sarah Bernhardt in America many times.

LA TOSCA

"LA TOSCA" was first played in the United States in English on February 27, 1888, at the Broadway Theatre, New York. The cast was:

THE SARDOU PLAYS

<i>Floria Tosca</i>	FANNY DAVENPORT
<i>Baron Scarpia</i>	FRANK MORDAUNT
<i>Mario Casaradossi</i>	MELBOURNE MACDOWELL
<i>Cesare Angelotti</i>	HARRY DAVENPORT
<i>Marquis Atavanti</i>	W. B. MURRAY
<i>Busche</i>	W. T. M. HARRY
<i>Vicomte de Trevillac</i>	ARCHIBALD COUPER
<i>Capicola</i>	H. A. CARR
<i>Travulce</i>	FRANK McDONALD
<i>Sciarrone</i>	J. WELDON
<i>Prince d'Arragon</i>	J. H. ROBERTS
<i>General</i>	FREDERICK PETERS
<i>Reine Marie Caroline</i>	JUDITH BEROLDE
<i>Princess Ortonia</i>	ELEANOR MERRON

Fanny Davenport was still playing "La Tosca" up to 1894, when she was seen in it at the Grand Opera House, New York. There were few changes in her company, the most important being for a time F. McCollough Ross to replace MacDowell in the rôle of "Mario," and Eleanor Merron playing "Queen Marie Caroline," in place of Judith Berolde.

"La Tosca" was first played in French in the United States on February 5, 1891, at the Garden Theatre, New York. The cast was:

<i>Floria Tosca</i>	MADAME BERNHARDT
<i>Reine Marie Caroline</i>	MADAME MEA
<i>Le Baron Scarpia</i>	M. DUQUESNE
<i>Mario Casaradossi</i>	M. FLEURY
<i>Cesare Angelotti</i>	M. ANGELO
<i>Le Marquis Atavanti</i>	M. MUNIE

Madame Bernhardt also played "La Tosca" at the Standard Theatre, New York, in the same year, and at many other theatres throughout the country.

CLÉOPÂTRE

"CLÉOPÂTRE" was first played in French in the United States at the Garden Theatre, New York, on February 9, 1891. The cast was:

<i>Cléopâtre</i>	MME. SARAH BERNHARDT
<i>Octavie</i>	MME. MEA
<i>Charmiane</i>	MME. SIMONSON
<i>Iras</i>	MME. B. GILBERT
<i>Marc Antoine</i>	M. DARMONT
<i>Demétrius</i>	M. DUQUESNE

Some months later an English version, "Cleopatra," was produced at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on December 23, 1891. The cast was:

<i>Cleopatra</i>	FANNY DAVENPORT
<i>Octavia</i>	IDA FROHAWK
<i>Mark Antony</i>	MELBOURNE MACDOWELL
<i>Kephren</i>	THEODORE ROBERTS
<i>Thyscus</i>	GEORGE OSBOURNE
<i>Charmian</i>	BLANCHE MOULTON
<i>Iras</i>	LILLIAN BURKE

On March 21, 1892, and on December 12, 1893, Fanny Davenport again appeared in "Cleopatra," at the Harlem Opera House, New York. Miss Davenport appeared as "Cleopatra" many times in various American cities up to 1898.

GISMONDA

FANNY DAVENPORT also produced "Gismonda" for the first time in the United States, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on December 11, 1894. The cast was, in part:

<i>Gismonda</i>	FANNY DAVENPORT
<i>Almerio</i>	MELBOURNE MACDOWELL
<i>Zaccaria</i>	THEODORE ROBERTS
<i>Bishop Sophron</i>	ARTHUR ELLIOT
<i>Thisbe</i>	MARY E. BARKER

When Fanny Davenport presented "Gismonda" at the Boston Theatre, on February 26, 1895, it ran for four weeks. The receipts for the twenty-eight performances were \$42,005.25; an average of \$1500 for each performance. "Gismonda" is one of the least successful of the Sardou plays, which gives some idea of how much money Miss Davenport must have made from her Sardou engagements, which extended over a number of years.

THEODORA

"THEODORA" was first played in the United States at Niblo's Garden, New York, on September 13, 1886. This was the first English translation, made by arrangement between Sardou and Miss Lillian Olcott, who played "Theodora." Other members of the cast were:

<i>Andreas</i>	JOHN H. GILMORE
<i>Justinian</i>	HUDSON LISTON
<i>Antonina</i>	CARRIE G. VINTON
<i>Tamyris</i>	LAURA L. PHILLIPS

"Théodora" (in French) was played at the Star Theatre, New York, in 1887, by Sarah Bernhardt.

"Théodora" (in French) was played at the Standard Theatre, New York, in November, 1891, and at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, in April, 1892, on Sarah Bernhardt's fourth American tour, the part of the Empress being taken by Madame Bernhardt.

BOSOM FRIENDS

ONE of Sardou's earliest successes was "Nos Intimes," several versions of which have been played. The best-known is the version by Horace Wigan, entitled in England, "Friends or Foes." This version, under the title of "Bosom Friends," was produced at Wallack's Theatre, New York, in October, 1863. The cast was:

<i>Mr. Union</i>	LESTER WALLACK
<i>Dr. Bland</i>	CHARLES FISHER
<i>Mr. Yielding</i>	JOHN GILBERT
<i>Mr. Meanley</i>	A. W. YOUNG
<i>Mrs. Meanley</i>	MRS. VERNON
<i>Mrs. Union</i>	MRS. HOEY
<i>Peril</i>	W. B. REYNOLDS
<i>Borrowell</i>	JOHN SEFTON
<i>Donoghue</i>	W. H. NORTON

This version was revived at Wallack's, on April 29, 1865, the leading rôles being thus cast:

<i>Mr. Union</i>	CHARLES FISHER
<i>Dr. Bland</i>	W. R. FLOYD
<i>Mrs. Union</i>	MADLINE HENRIQUES

It was again revived at Wallack's on December 6, 1875, with a cast beginning thus:

<i>Mr. Union</i>	EDWARD ARNOTT
<i>Dr. Bland</i>	H. J. MONTAGUE
<i>Mr. Yielding</i>	JOHN GILBERT
<i>Mrs. Union</i>	ADA DYAS

Another version of "Nos Intimes," by Scott and Sephenson, entitled "Peril," was played by Mrs. Lily Langtry and her company, at Niblo's Garden, New York, in February, 1885, and at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, on October 4, 1886. In January, 1894, "Nos Intimes" was produced at Abbey's Theatre, with Coquelin and Jane Hading in the leading rôles.

AGNES

A SARDOU play that was first produced in the United States was billed as "Agnes, a five-act drama written expressly for Miss Agnes Ethel, and played for the first time on any stage in New York, on Tuesday, September 17, 1872." The original French

version was performed at the Paris Gymnase, on March 17, 1873, under the title of "Andréa." Miss Ethel's version was produced at the Union Square Theatre, New York, on September 17, 1872, with the following cast:

<i>Agnes, Viscountess de Thomery</i>	MISS AGNES ETHEL
<i>Mlle. Stella, Première Danseuse at the Grand Opera</i>	MISS PHILLIS GLOVER
<i>The Baroness de Fautreille</i>	MISS PLESSY MORDAUNT
<i>Mme. Grandiguard</i>	MISS EMILY MESTAYER
<i>Delphine</i>	MISS JENNY LEE
<i>Therese</i>	MISS JOSEPHINE LAURENCE
<i>Dressmaker</i>	MISS KATE HOLLAND
<i>Milliner</i>	MISS CHARLOTTE COPE
<i>Stephen, Viscount de Thomery</i>	MR. D. H. HARKINS
<i>Jean Bonnard</i>	MR. MARK SMITH
<i>Millefleur</i>	MR. ED. LAMB
<i>Bienville</i>	MR. GEO. PARKER
<i>Boby, Director of the Opera</i>	MR. WELSH EDWARDS
<i>Baroldi, Prefect of Police</i>	MR. F. F. MACKAY
<i>Polydor Morant</i>	MR. H. MONTGOMERY
<i>Dr. Coullisse</i>	MR. W. B. LAURENCE

And nine minor characters on the programme, reporters, valets, stage carpenters, etc.

DIVORÇONS

AN English version of "Divorçons" was presented at Abbey's Park Theatre, New York, on March 14, 1882. "Cyprienne" was played by Alice Dunning (Lingard), "M. Des Prunelles" by Frederic Robinson, and "Adhemar de Gratignan" by C. B. Welles. This was the first presentation of the play in the United States in English. It was subsequently produced many times in various versions and languages in England and America.

The best-known English version is "The Queen's Proctor," by Herman Merrivale, referred to elsewhere. "Divorçons" was first played in New York at Abbey's Park Theatre, on March 14, 1882, as set forth above. In May of the same year Grau's French Opera Company presented it with Paola Marie as "Cyprienne." Since then it has been played in New York by Marie Aimée in 1883, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre; by Madame Judic at Wallack's in 1885; by Modjeska at Wallack's in 1886; by Frau Hedwing Niemann-Raabe at Wallack's in 1888; by Réjane at Abbey's in 1895; by Duse at the Fifth Avenue in 1893 and 1895; by Arthur Bouchier, at the Bijou in December, 1896; by Mrs. Fiske at the Fifth Avenue in May, 1897; by Emily Raucker under the title of "A Divorce Cure," at the Murray Hill in March, 1897; by Mrs. Fiske again in 1898, at the Fifth Avenue, and later at the Manhattan. A new version by Margaret Mayo was produced by Grace George, at Wallack's in April, 1907.

A performance in Italian by Eleonora Duse and her company was given at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on February 17, 1893. The cast follows:

<i>Cyprienne</i>	ELEONORA DUSE
<i>Des Prunelles</i>	F. ANDO
<i>Adhémar</i>	A. GALLIANI
<i>Clavignac</i>	S. BONIVENTO
<i>Madame de Brionne</i>	SIGNORA G. MAGAZZARI
<i>Madame de Valfontaine</i>	SIGNORA E. ROPELO
<i>Madame de Lusignan</i>	SIGNORA C. BUFFI

Mrs. Minnie Maddern Fiske produced a version of her own at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on June 10, 1898. The cast follows:

<i>Cyprienne</i>	MINNIE MADDERN
<i>Des Prunelles</i>	FREDERIC DE BELLEVILLE
<i>Adhémar</i>	MAX FIGMAN
<i>Clavignac</i>	GEORGE TRADER
<i>Commissioner of Police</i>	WILFRED NORTH
<i>The Waiter</i>	NICK LONG
<i>Madame de Brionne</i>	SYDNEY COWELL
<i>Mdlle. de Lusignan</i>	HARRIET STERLING

FERNANDE

"FERNANDE" was first played in New York on June 7, 1870, at Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre. The cast follows:

<i>Marquis André</i>	GEORGE CLARKE
<i>Philip Pomerol</i>	D. H. HARKINS
<i>Jarbi</i>	JAMES LEWIS
<i>Roqueville</i>	G. F. DE VERE
<i>Bracassin</i>	GEORGE PARKES
<i>The Baron</i>	F. CHAPMAN
<i>Santa Crus</i>	MR. PIERCE
.....	ALFRED H. STEWART
.....	FREDERIC H. BEEMAN
<i>Fernande</i>	AGNES ETHEL
<i>Countess Clotilde</i>	FANNY MORANT
<i>Georgette</i>	FANNY DAVENPORT
<i>Madame Seneschal</i>	MRS. GILBERT
<i>Madame de la Brienne</i>	AMY AMES
<i>The Baroness</i>	MISS ROWLAND
<i>Peachblossom</i>	ROBERTA NORWOOD
<i>Gibratta</i>	FANNY REEVES
<i>Therese</i>	EMILY KIEHL

"Fernande" was revived at Daly's Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, in November, 1870, with Linda Dietz as "Georgette"; again in March, 1870, with Louis James as "André"; at the Grand Opera House on February 5, 1877, by Augustin Daly's company; and at Daly's Theatre in November, 1879, with Ada Rehan as "Georgette," others in the cast being John Drew, C. Leclercq, G. Parkes,

Miss Estelle Clayton, and Miss Mary Fielding. Again at Daly's Theatre it was played three times in the spring season of 1880.

Another version of "Fernande," entitled "Clotilde," said to be the work of David Belasco, was first played at the Union Square Theatre, New York, on June 4, 1873. The cast follows:

<i>Fernande</i>	AGNES ETHEL
<i>Countess Clotilde</i>	MRS. E. L. DAVENPORT
<i>Georgette</i>	KATE CLAXTON
<i>Madame Seneschal</i>	EMILY MESTAYER
<i>Madame de la Brienne</i>	JOSEPHINE LAURENS
<i>Peachblossom</i>	PANNY HAYWARD
<i>Gibritta</i>	HELEN FORREST
<i>The Baroness</i>	CHARLOTTE CAVE
<i>Therese</i>	KATE HOLLAND
<i>Babetta</i>	MRS. WILDER
<i>Philip Pomerol</i>	D. H. HARRIS
<i>Marquis Andri</i>	CLAUDE BURROUGHS
<i>Commander Jarbi</i>	ED. LAMB
<i>Rogueville</i>	W. B. LAURENS
<i>Bracassin</i>	H. W. MONTGOMERY
<i>Baron</i>	W. STUART
<i>Frederic</i>	W. H. WILDER
<i>Alfred</i>	FRANK LAMB
<i>Antoine</i>	W. S. QUIGLEY

This was the first appearance of Mrs. E. L. Davenport in New York for several years, and the first appearance of Kate Claxton at this theatre. "Fernande" was presented in New York at various other times by practically the same company.

"Fernande" in Italian was produced at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on January 30, February 10, and February 13, 1893, "Clotilde" being played by Eleonora Duse.

MADAME SANS-GÈNE

"MADAME SANS-GÈNE" was produced in English at the Broadway Theatre, New York, on January 18, 1895, with the following cast:

<i>Madame Sans-Gêne</i>	KATHERYN KIDDER
<i>Napoleon</i>	AUGUSTUS COOK
<i>Lefebvre</i>	HAROLD RUSSELL
<i>Fouché</i>	WALLACE SNAW
<i>De Neipperg</i>	JAMES K. HACKETT
<i>Despreaux</i>	CHARLES PLUNKETT
<i>Queen Caroline of Naples</i>	MARIE SNOTWELL
<i>Princess Elise</i>	HENRIETTA LANDER

"Madame Sans-Gêne" was played at Abbey's Theatre, New York, on February 27, 1895, advertised as by "the original Paris company." The cast was in part:

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<i>Madame Sans-Gêne</i>	MADAME RÉJANE
<i>Napoleon</i>	M. DUQUESNE
<i>Fouché</i>	M. GILDES
<i>Lefebvre</i>	M. CAUDE
<i>Queen Caroline</i>	ADRIÈE MARTIAL
<i>Princess Elisa</i>	MADAME DULUC MAURY

At Wallack's Theatre "Madame Sans-Gêne" was played for two weeks beginning April 6, 1896. It was played at the Harlem Opera House January 27, 1897, with Kathryn Kidder in the title rôle; and at the Grand Opera House, March 29, 1897. At the Irving Place Theatre it was seen in October, 1898, with Anna Braga as "Madame Sans-Gêne," and Emil Marx as "Napoleon."

The play was revived at Daly's Theatre, New York, on January 3, 1899, "Madame Sans-Gêne" being played by Ada Rehan. Others in the cast were:

<i>Napoleon</i>	GEORGE CLARK
<i>Lefebvre</i>	CHARLES RICHMAN
<i>Fouché</i>	SYDNEY HERBERT
<i>De Neipperg</i>	WHITE WHITTLESBY
<i>Savary</i>	WILLIAM OWEN
<i>Despreaux</i>	WILFRED CLARKE
<i>Queen of Naples</i>	MAY CARGILL
<i>Princess Elisa</i>	MABEL ROEBUCK

In this presentation Ada Rehan did not make a popular success in the part of "Madame Sans-Gêne," although she was at the time a great favourite. On October 30, 1899, the play was put on at the Murray Hill Theatre.

The Irving-Terry company revived the play at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, on October 28, 1901. The cast was in part:

<i>Napoleon</i>	SIR HENRY IRVING
<i>Madame Sans-Gêne</i>	ELLEN TERRY
<i>Fouché</i>	LAWRENCE IRVING
<i>Lefebvre</i>	J. H. BARNES
<i>Comte de Neipperg</i>	A. ROYSTON
<i>Queen of Naples</i>	MAUD MILTON

DANIEL ROCHAT

"DANIEL ROCHAT" was produced at the Union Square Theatre, New York, on October 16, 1880. The cast follows:

<i>Daniel Rochat</i>	CHARLES R. THORNE
<i>Dr. Bidache</i>	J. H. STODDARD
<i>William Fargis</i>	JOHN PARSELLE
<i>Casimir Fargis</i>	WALDEN RAMSAY
<i>Leo Henderson</i>	SARA JEWETT
<i>Esther Henderson</i>	MAUD HARRISON
<i>Mrs. Powers</i>	MRS. E. J. PHILLIPS
<i>Ellen Bloomfield</i>	NETTA GUYON

The piece ran till December 14, 1880. It was revived at the Union Square Theatre on November 14, 1881. Frederic de Belleville figured in the cast; otherwise the principals were the same as in 1880.

THERMIDOR

AN English version of "Thermidor" was produced at Proctor's Theatre, New York, on October 5, 1891. The cast was in part: Martial Hugon, J. Forbes Robertson; Charles Labussiere, Frederic Bond; Fabienne Lecoulteux, Elsie de Wolfe.

It was played at the Harlem Opera House, December 21, 1891.

The piece was played in French at Abbey's Theatre, New York, on January 8, 1894, when the principals were:

<i>Fabienne Lecoulteux</i>	JANE HADING
<i>Labussiere</i>	M. COQUELIN
<i>Martial Hugon</i>	M. VOLNEY
<i>Lupin</i> }	M. JEAN COQUELIN
<i>Joliban</i> }	

AMERICANS ABROAD

"AMERICANS ABROAD," advertised as "A Three-act Comedy, by Victorien Sardou," was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, New York, on December 5, 1892, with the following cast:

<i>Gilbert Raymond</i>	HERBERT KELCEY
<i>Richard Fairbanks</i>	W. J. LE MOYNE
<i>Landolphe</i>	E. J. RATCLIFFE
<i>Florence Winthrop</i>	MISS GEORGIA CAYVAN
<i>Baroness de Beaumont</i>	MRS. CHAS. WALCOT
<i>Madame Pontcarré</i>	MISS MAY ROBSON
<i>Madame Olivares</i>	MISS MADGE CARR
<i>Casimir Lajolly</i>	MR. FRITZ WILLIAMS
<i>Bardin</i>	MR. CHARLES W. KING
<i>Pendleton</i>	MR. AUGUSTUS COOK
<i>Lord Saltounstall</i>	MR. KING
<i>Marcel</i>	MR. V. GLASER
<i>Angela</i>	MISS GERTRUDE RIVERS
<i>Ida</i>	MISS WINTONA SHANNON
<i>Julie</i>	MISS JOSEPHINE BENNETT

This play ran through the season at the Lyceum Theatre. At the Harlem Opera House it appeared on December 4, 1893.

A WOMAN'S SILENCE

AN English version of an unnamed MS. play by Sardou, made by J. Comyns Carr, was called in the United States "A

Woman's Silence." It was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, New York, on November 20, 1894, with the following cast:

<i>Maurice</i>	HERBERT KELCEY
<i>Hector</i>	W. J. LE MOYNE
<i>Sir Arthur Greyson</i>	STEPHEN GRATTAN
<i>M. Dupres</i>	CHARLES WALCOT
<i>Dorothea March</i>	GEORGIA CAYVAN
<i>Lucy Gordon</i>	KATHARINE FLORENCE
<i>Delphine</i>	ADRIENNA DAIROLLES
<i>Baroness von Stannitz</i>	BESSIE TYREE

This was the last appearance of Miss Georgia Cayvan on the stage prior to her illness and death.

This same version, under the name of "Delia Harding," was produced in London, at the Comedy Theatre, on April 17, 1895.

UNCLE SAM

A VERSION of the Sardou play, "Uncle Sam," was produced at the Grand Opera House, New York, on March 17, 1873, and withdrawn after a few representations.

SPIRITISME

AN English version of "Spiritisme," in four acts, was produced at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, on February 22, 1897, with the following cast:

<i>Manoel Clavagal</i>	MAURICE BARRYMORE
<i>Valentine Clavibes</i>	J. H. GILMOUR
<i>Robert D'Aubenas</i>	NELSON WHEATCROFT
<i>Dr. Parisot</i>	W. F. OWEN
<i>Dr. James Douglas</i>	CHAS. HARBURY
<i>George D'Aubenas</i>	FRITZ WILLIAMS
<i>Simone</i>	VIRGINIA HARNED
<i>Thecla</i>	OLIVE OLIVER

ROBESPIERRE

LAWRENCE IRVING's translation of "Robespierre" was produced at the Knickerbocker Theatre, New York, on October 30, 1899, by the London Lyceum Company, with Sir Henry Irving and Ellen Terry in the cast. It ran for two weeks.

Henry Irving returned to the Knickerbocker Theatre in "Robespierre" on March 12, 1900; and again on March 19 and 20, of the same year, with Ellen Terry.

LA SORCIÈRE

AN English version of "La Sorcière," entitled "The Sorceress" (translated by Louis N. Parker), was first produced in New York, on October 10, 1904, at the New Amsterdam Theatre, with the following cast:

<i>Cardinal Ximenes</i>	FREDERICK PERRY
<i>Don Enrique de Palacios</i>	GUY STANDING
<i>Lopes de Padilla</i>	GEORGE RIDDELL
<i>Cardenas</i>	L. ROGERS LYTTON
<i>Cleofas</i>	FULLER MELLISH
<i>Olivera</i>	H. OGDEN CRANE
<i>Ramiro</i>	ORME CALDARA
<i>Fray Eugenio Calabazas</i>	H. L. FORBES
<i>Fray Teofilo Ibarra</i>	R. C. MORSE
<i>Fray Miguel Molina</i>	F. M. WILDER
<i>Fray Hernando Albornos</i>	E. J. GLENDINNING
<i>Fares</i>	WILLIAM BALFOUR
<i>D'Aquilar</i>	LAURENCE EDDINGER
<i>Gil Andres</i>	JOHN W. THOMPSON
<i>Don Ambrosio</i>	C. H. OGDEN
<i>Riubos</i>	GEORGE LANE
<i>Velasco</i>	WALTER HENRY
<i>Christobal</i>	W. RAULTON
<i>A Goatherd</i>	EDGAR ALLAN WOOLF
<i>Gines</i>	WILLIAM MARSTON
<i>Arias</i>	HENRY FORBES
<i>Zoraya</i>	MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL
<i>Afrida</i>	ALICE BUTLER
<i>Manuela</i>	GERTRUDE COGHAN
<i>Fatoum</i>	MARGARET BOURNE
<i>Aisha</i>	MILDRED BEVERLY
<i>Joana</i>	MARTHA WALDRON
<i>Zaquir</i>	KATHERINE RAYNORE
<i>Dona Rufina</i>	FLORENCE GELBART
<i>Dona Syrena</i>	SARA LEIGH
<i>Dona Serafina</i>	GIULIA STRAKOSCH
<i>Dona Fabia</i>	EDNA LARKIN
<i>A Peasant Woman</i>	EUGENIA FLAGG

THE LOVE LETTER

AN English version of "La Piste," made by Ferdinand Gottschalk, was produced at the Lyric Theatre, New York, on October 10, 1905. The cast included W. J. Ferguson, William Courtenay, Albert Grau, Charles Quinn, Virginia Harned, Eleanor Moretti, and Mary Stockwell.

ANDRÉ FORTIER

IN 1879 the managers of the Boston Theatre commissioned Sardou to write a play expressly for them. It was entitled "André Fortier, the Hero of the Calaveras," and was produced at their theatre in Boston, on March 11, 1879. It ran four weeks, but does not seem to have been revived since.

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THE EXILES

A FIVE-ACT drama adapted from Sardou, Nus, and Lubomirsky, by L. R. Shewell, entitled "The Exiles," was produced in Boston, on December 10, 1877, at the Boston Theatre. It ran to large houses for ten weeks. Among the cast were Louis James, E. J. Buckley, and Miss Marie Wainwright.

In New York "The Exiles" was first produced by James Duff, at the Broadway Theatre (later Daly's), on March 2, 1878. On April 10, of the same year, it was put on at Booth's Theatre. On November 11, 1889, it was put on at Niblo's Garden, New York, and on December 9, 1889, it was seen at the Harlem Opera House. On February 10, 1890, it was produced at the Grand Opera House, and on March 24, 1890, at the People's Theatre.

PATRIE

"PATRIE" was first played in America at the Grand Opera House, New York, on May 24, 1869. It ran for two weeks. It was revived on September 13, 1869. The part of "Captain Karloo" was played by Frank Mayo.

An English version of "Patrie," called "Dolores," made by Mrs. Sarah Lane, was produced in Boston, on March 19, 1888, at the Boston Theatre, by Bolossy Kiralfy; in New York at Niblo's Garden, April 2, 1888; and at the Grand Opera House, May 21, 1888.

A MAN OF HONOR

DURING the winter season of 1873, at Wallack's Theatre, New York, an adaptation by Dion Boucicault from a Sardou play (French original not identified), entitled, "A Man of Honor," ran for four weeks. Among the members of the Wallack company were Lester Wallack, Harry Beckett, H. J. Montague, John Gilbert, E. M. Holland, C. A. Stevenson, Miss Jeffreys Lewis, Miss Dyas, Madame Ponisi, Miss Effie Germon.

A FAST FAMILY

THE autumn season of 1866 at Wallack's Theatre, New York, was opened with a version of "La Famille Benoiton," entitled, "A Fast Family." It was produced on September 18, 1866, and